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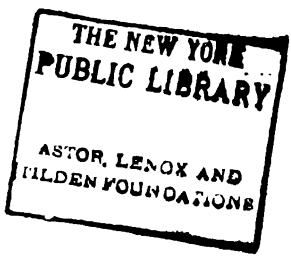
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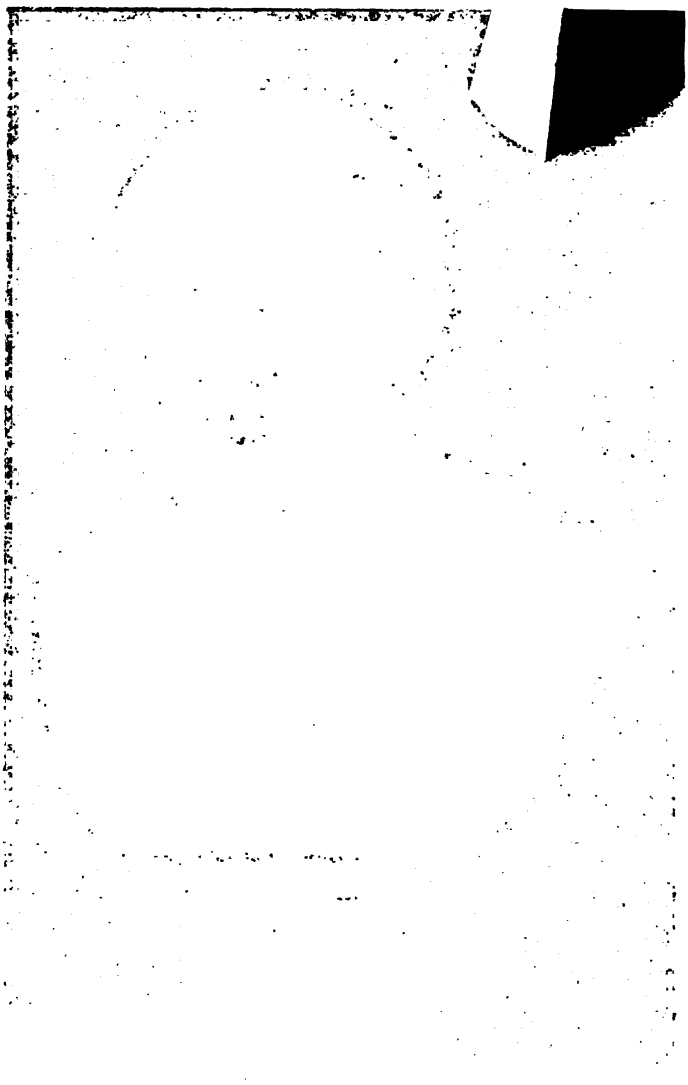
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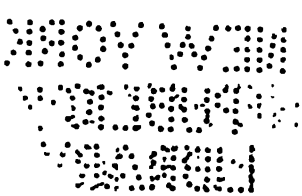
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INTRODUCTION TO CLASSICAL LATIN LITERATURE

LATIN LITERATURE

INTRODUCTION

THE various types of civilized European man, which even in their older homes are steadily assimilating and approaching each other, are upon our own continent, and especially in our own land, swiftly fusing into one. It is peculiarly important for the American, therefore, to study the various currents that meet in ourselves. Teuton, Norman and Kelt, Slav, Latin and Greek, are all in varying degree our ancestors. Moreover, it is doubly interesting gradually to realize that most of these races have already had, for at least two thousand years, a common, unified, and unbroken history. All play a part in the large story of European life.

So far as literary monuments are concerned, we attempt here to outline the second chapter of that long story. Naturally, a most needful preparation is a perusal of the first. In other words, Latin literature should be approached after a sympathetic acquaintance with the masterpieces of the Greek imagination. Indeed, the influence of Hellenes and Romans upon ourselves is largely one. Such an adjective as Græco-Roman has often a fitness of its own. Yet the contrasts between the two chief peoples of antiquity make a striking and tempting theme.

The Greek whom we really know, in early literature, is the Eastward Ionian. Counting himself, even in his

Asian seats, an exile, he holds his home-ties lightly. He wanders forth gladly for traffic, for adventure, to far-off colonial settlements, or, especially if an artist, to the courts of Greek tyrants and even of barbarian patrons. He is awake to all impressions from the picturesque, varied, swift-changing world about him. The contrast between his own nature and that of other races strikes him forcibly. The supreme mysteries of life and death, even, he faces with wide-open eyes. Gods, dæmons, nymphs, he readily shapes for himself, preferably in human form. Projecting his own desires, loves, hates, into the infinite, the Greek dreamer tells himself marvelous tales of divinities and demigods. The myths of early Hellas are the delight of childhood still.

The enjoyment of beauty, the power of expression, awoke early. If the Ionians learned, from the Phœnician or elsewhere, their alphabet, the arts of trade, the way across the stepping-stones of the Ægean to ever remoter wandering, the yet bolder roving paths of the human fancy,—they quickly bettered their teachings. So epic, philosophic inquiry, lyric, prose chronicle, sprang up in swift succession among the children of the myth-makers.

Of large statecraft there is little trace. Individualism is excessive. The Asiatic cities, of kindred speech, religion, culture, lived out each its isolated and turbulent life, to fall an early and easy prey to Oriental conquerors. Of yet greater individual energy, and much creative power, with even less fitness for civic organism, we catch a glimpse in the Æolic Greeks, especially on the lovely island of Lesbos.

At Athens, in the century of Pericles, we find a larger form of civic life, rushing to swift wreck, however, on the reefs of selfish aggression, conquest, empire. Yet there was time, barely time, for tragedy, most elaborate of literary forms, to attain perfection. Comedy, political

history, oratory, philosophic speculation, found supreme expression in Aristophanes, Thukydides, Demosthenes, Plato. The last is in spirit a great imaginative poet also.

Theocritos, and the Anthology, show us that the fresh original imagination of early Hellas lived on far into the decadent centuries. Indeed this creative power of the Greek man is the supreme miracle of European history. It is still to be seen in his sculpture and architecture no less, while of his painting and music we have received little more than a loving tradition. Of minor artists, such as carvers of gems or decorators of vases, there seem to have been legions, not merely in Periclean Athens, but in many Greek lands and centuries.

The little Laconian garrison, encamped amid a host of stubborn-hearted vanquished foes, of slaves with the spirit of freemen, maintained itself wonderfully, but the wider power and wealth thrust upon Sparta, as by accident, in 479 B.C. and again in 404 B.C., found her quite unfit to use them. Her sluggish Dorian nature was excited, but dazed by such widening vistas of duty, and she soon cowered into her narrow shell again. The poets and other artists of Laconia had been, from the first, chiefly guests, of Æolic or Ionian birth.

With all its unique genius, the Greek race failed to become a dominant nation, or even an united free people. It is not safe to attribute this lack chiefly to the peculiar physical contour of their little peninsula, to the isolation of each dale or hill-crest. The most peaceful and lasting confederation in Europe unites the vales and peaks of Switzerland. The lack of union among Greeks is at least as marked in Ionia, or in Sicily. It was probably inherent in the Hellenic nature. Politically they seem almost a race of gifted children, who never accepted the restraints of full manhood, the compromises of civic life.

In the ideal commonwealth there will be the utmost

individual freedom, the utmost encouragement of original and creative genius, but all powers will be regarded as consecrated to the public service.

Rome grew up at the northernmost point of Latium, pushed like a wedge into hostile territory, but strongly protected by the Tiber, and uplifted upon the Palatine and Capitoline. The names of Numa and Lars Porsena are plainly monuments respectively of early Sabine and Etruscan conquest, which must have left also permanent elements in the population. Latian, however, the little hill-city always remained.

Early Latium is a home of sturdy, unimaginative peasantry. Each man held firmly his ploughshare, or, if need be, the pike, knowing little of music or song, nothing of adventurous wandering, real or imagined. His gods were but faint personifications of the most prosaic realities. Janus presided over the changing year, Terminus over the boundary-stone, Volutina is the fair goddess of corn-shucks. Ancestors, like Picus and Faunus, may fitly be worshipped at the family hearth as Lares, but few picturesque legends grow up about the names. Each man's genius follows or guides him through the sober phases of a monotonous life. This absence of myth, of fancy, is the most striking trait in the Roman nature. Their one poet who feels adequately the reverent sympathy of a Wordsworth, or a Bryant, with Nature, in her wilder and lonelier aspects, is a materialist and an atheist. The one chronicler who has much of Herodotos's grace as a story-teller has but a single type of tale to tell. Heroic and stoical self-sacrifice for the Fatherland is his constant theme.

Such a people will have to be taught not merely the alphabet but the whole art of poetry: and they will hardly surpass their teachers. The concession that Virgil makes for the plastic arts, for science, and even, too sweepingly,



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for forensic oratory, might well have included his own craft as well. He is thinking of Greeks, only, when he cries:

Virgil's Æneid, VI., 847–53.

"Others will mould more deftly the breathing bronze, I concede it,
Or from the marble block lead forth the face of the living:
Others excel in the pleading of causes: delineate better
Motions of heavenly bodies, and tell of the stars and their risings.
Thou, oh Roman, remember to curb with thy empire the nations.
These thine arts shall be, and of peace to impose the conditions,
Sparing those who submit, but crushing in battle the haughty."

This closing boast, also, is fully justified. While they have much resemblance to the Spartans, the Romans differ radically from them in this: When happy chance, and their own unflagging discipline, made them lords of Latium, of Italy, of the Mediterranean world, they promptly developed also the power and daring to hold firmly what they had boldly won. We may disapprove their methods, deplore their failure to create representative assemblies, ridicule the attempt to govern the earth with the machinery of a town-meeting. The fact remains, that the Romans accomplished this feat.

When the oligarchy of a few families decayed, the dictators and emperors who succeeded them were Romans still. The wealth wrung from scores of proud historic races, now helpless provincials, was lavished on the imperial capital and its idle proletariat. Even the flexible Greek language, with all the start given it by its unapproachable masterpieces, and later by Alexander's conquests, only maintained itself side by side with Latin. When the political centre shifted eastward, it made room

for a religious primacy which remains in large measure to the present hour.

Italy was indeed overrun by barbarians, and Rome itself repeatedly sacked, in the fifth century A.D. Yet the Byzantine empire, which in some fashion survived a thousand years longer, was itself a Roman creation. Rome, then, did at least build the bridge by which the salvage from classical antiquity came across the age of Gothic conquest, over the centuries of confusion and growing darkness,—to the modern world.

Roman workers in every art had Greek masterpieces constantly before them. Latin literature hardly begins until the decadent Alexandrian age of Hellas was far advanced. Conscious study of style, direct imitation of Hellenic models, even slavish translation, came first of all. The Greek myths are coolly borrowed entire, and assigned to Roman gods, whose attributes suggested a resemblance. The wanderings of Heracles, Odysseus, Æneas, are extended into Italy. Even important gods, like Apollo, Pluto, Proserpine, and others, are adopted, name and myths alike, from the Hellenic pantheon.

Under all these conditions, the most surprising fact is, that much of the peculiar Roman nature does nevertheless come to expression in the classical Latin literature. The steadfast patriotism of Romans, their gravity, a certain Stoical reticence as to purely subjective emotion, informs the work even of those authors who are most clearly inspired by the Greek muse.

Latin literature as a whole displays talent rather than genius, good taste oftener than creative force. It bears to the Greek somewhat the relation which the age of Anne holds to the century of Shakespeare and Spenser. Above all, the best authors and works are, as a rule, those most fully imbued with the Greek spirit, often, as in the

supreme example of Virgil, those most frankly imitative, in plot and in detail, of Greek models.

Here we may discover a certain analogy to our own conditions. America was so dominated by the language and literature of England, that we remained timidly provincial in this field long after political independence was won. The sturdiest spirits of our folk, from Franklin to Lincoln, have been much more absorbed in action than in literary art. A master of expression may yet arise among us, to be, like Dante or Goethe, the largest figure of the national life: but he certainly has not yet appeared and been recognized.

Meantime, it may be especially instructive for many men and women, in an age when poetry seems forceless and the imagination enfeebled, to discover, if we can, how the Roman attained to taste, to skill, to adequate self-utterance, hampered, or guided, by models too familiar and too mighty to be ignored.

Even a Cicero or a Horace is not ashamed to speak of letters as an avocation for leisure hours, or as a pastime too trivial for the greatest of men. Though not true of these two Romans, it is indeed true of their people, that their contributions to the art of government, civic organization, law, even their road-building and engineering generally, suffice to lift them to a proud pre-eminence, quite apart from their record in the fine arts. Indeed, we must always remember, that but for the mighty ark which Cæsar and Augustus shaped, the precious records of Greek life might themselves never have come down to us, but might have vanished utterly when the destructive hordes of our ancestry swept again and again over the fair lands of Southern Europe. Our hearty admiration for the great Julius, and the race whom he typifies, should color every line in which we record, as here, but one side, perhaps a lesser phase, of their great gift to aftertime.

GENERAL BIBLIOGRAPHY

We indicate here the needful equipment of one shelf in a very modest school or departmental library, for constant use with such a book as this. Some encyclopædic works like the "Britannica," the Smith "Dictionary of Antiquities," etc., may surely be taken for granted. Among the larger histories of early Rome, available in English, Ihne's is perhaps even more helpful to the young student than Mommsen's masterpiece, since it gives the traditional account, with some fulness, before attacking it with the destructive weapons of modern scholarship. Of single-volume school histories the best packed is probably Shuckburgh's, but it stops at Actium. The large page of Kiepert's Classical Atlas makes it available, almost like a wall-map, for a whole class.

The teacher's desk needs at least one large history of Latin literature. The completest references to the sources, with frequent brief quotations also, are in Teuffel, which is translated with fair accuracy by Warr. Much more readable, in German, is Ribbeck's "Geschichte der Römischen Dichtung," or, in French, Patin's "Études sur la Poésie Latine." Mommsen's occasional chapters on literature are illuminating. Sellar's "Roman Poets" was left incomplete, but nearly covers the Augustan age as well as the Republic. It is judicious, scholarly, somewhat soporific. The large work of G. A. Simcox is wilful, but will be found stimulating, quite copious, and often doubly useful for its references.

Above all, the classical authors themselves should be available, in faithful literary versions, indicating clearly the lines or sections of the Latin or Greek works, for those who do not read the original with ease. Such a book as Shuckburgh's "Polybios," or Clough's "Plutarch," will always have a hundred readers for one who can even consult the original text on a doubtful detail. Another Greek work, the history of early Rome by Dionysios the Halicarnassian, ought to be accessible, for though writing in Rome, and in Livy's time, he is curiously independent of him.

For Livy we have the Bohn Library version. Extremely useful, also, is the complete prose translation of Virgil's works by Conington, published in one inexpensive volume by Lee. Other translations will be mentioned under the several authors.

For those who read Latin we earnestly recommend the use also of text editions of other than school authors, *e.g.*, Aulus Gellius and Macrobius, in the Teubner series. The sixth volume of Bährens's

"Poetæ Latini Minores," in the same series, contains all the non-dramatic fragments of Nævius, Ennius, Lucilius, and many others. A complete Livy fills but five Teubner volumes, the fragments of the lost historians, including the Annales Maximi, Cato, etc., only one. Special students will of course require Ribbeck's "Fragmenta Tragicorum" and "Comicorum," and the various volumes of the Iwan Müller "Handbuch." Peter's Chronological Tables is a most excellent German work.

BOOK I

THE REPUBLICAN AGE

(TO 100 B.C.)

CHAPTER I

TRACES OF EARLY LATIN POETRY AND PROSE

THE Romans undoubtedly received their alphabet from the neighboring Greek city, Cumæ. This Campanian colony, though Eubœan Chalkis was its true metropolis, took its name from Asiatic Kyme, which regarded itself as the special heir of the Trojan legend and stock. The influence of Cumæ is often seen in the early legends, notably in the tale of the Sybilline books, which were probably a collection of Greek oracles. The strange later adoption of a Trojan fugitive, Æneas, as the ancestor of Romulus, may have in part the same explanation.

Writing was in use very early. Polybios, a judicious and scholarly Greek, saw at Rome in the second century before Christ, and translates, the archaic text of a treaty with Carthage, ascribed to the first year of the Republic. Cicero, Livy, and Dionysios, believed they had seen the original texts of various treaties, on ox-hides, columns, or temple-wall, dating from the fifth century before Christ, or even from Servius Tullius's and Tarquin's day. As to the extreme antiquity of these memorials they were probably deceived. Our few inscriptions dating back to the fifth century before Christ are in a linguistic form which an Augustan scholar could not read, and would hardly have recognized as Latin at all.

509 B.C.
Polyb., iii., 22.
Cicero pro Balbo, 23, 53.
Livy, iv., 7, 20; vii., 3.
Dionysios, iv., 26, 58.

The first large mass of writing which we can date with certainty is the great code, known as the Laws of the

Twelve Tables, composed and promulgated by Appius Claudius and the other decemvirs, in 451–450 B.C. This code was long used as a first reader in schools, and its influence in moulding and fixing the prose style has been compared to that of Luther's Bible. The fragments cited by later authors cannot be safely restored to the original forms, but should be carefully studied as records of social conditions. Though Livy especially emphasizes the previous visit of an embassy in Athens, the Latian local color is strong, and we clearly have in the main a simple record of previous usage or "common law."

Livy, III., 34 ff.

"A beam built into a house or vine-trellis you mustn't pull out of its socket":—*i.e.*, even if it be your property, and stolen. Here we get at once a clear sketch of a rural and thrifty folk. "Women shall not scratch their cheeks, nor make lamentation at a funeral," is truly Roman Stoicism. The provisions for seizing a debtor, exhibiting him for redemption on three market-days, then cutting him up, seem cold-blooded indeed, despite the assurance that the creditors, in fact, always sold him whole, and divided up only the proceeds. The protection against him "who sings a bad song" might assure us that this grim folk *had* already songs, and some discrimination as to musical rendition; but the allusion is said to be merely to spells or incantations, sometimes even to libel, for which our Indians have a similar idiom: "A little bird sang in my ear." Perhaps we should not translate *carmen* as "song" at all. It may mean also "formula, aphorism, any phrase in fixt form." The forbidding of all rites for a man "slain by Jove's thunderbolt" shows an abject reverence very remote from the too familiar treatment of gods in the Homeric poems. The traitor, first scourged, then "hung on a tree of evil omen," reminds us effectively which virtue Rome set highest of all. A terrible and

famous example had been set by Brutus, whose own sons had conspired to restore the Tarquins. A father might thrice over sell his child. But a son, once detected in striking a parent, was "devoted to the gods of the family": whether immolated, or in some fashion outlawed or enslaved, may be debated.

Livy, ii., 4-5; Virgil, Æneid, vi., 817-23.

The question whether there was any truly national poetry antedating the Greek influences has been interestingly discussed by Macaulay. His own spirited rhymes, at any rate, are merely free paraphrases from Livy, a genial creative author well-read in Herodotos, and we are quite without direct evidence of any such purely Roman idylls. Cicero, it is true, says regretfully, "Would that those songs were extant, which Cato says, in his *Origines*, used to be sung in praise of illustrious heroes, at feasts, by the several banqueters, many centuries before his (Cato's) own time." It is but a doubly hearsay statement, for even Cato's age had no such songs preserved: else Cicero, who had the *Origines* before him, would have cited them. Indeed it is Cato again who remarks, perhaps more accurately: "The poetic art was nowise in honor. If anyone was interested in it, or devoted himself to feasts, he was called a vagabond."

Cicero, Brutus, 75. Tusculan Disputations, i., 2; iv., 2. Apud Aulum Gellium, xi., 2, 5.

The poet is actually nameless in early Rome. The very word *poeta* is borrowed from the Greek, and *vates*, bard, used with pride by Horace, formerly meant soothsayer, probably a reminder that rhythm was first attained in oracular utterances. These banqueters' songs were, then, at best, mere improvisations, without poetic quality or permanence. The "modest boys" mentioned by Varro, Cicero's contemporary, as introduced at feasts, to sing, "with or without the pipes, songs in honor

of the ancestors," cannot be assigned to any particular century.

Funerals were elaborate, for the Twelve Tables had to curtail the usages of grief. Women were hired to sing the *nænia* or dirge. In this case again we have no fragments, even, to quote. We cannot assert that it was a poetic composition.

The orations at funerals are sharply criticised by Cicero and Livy as most mendacious, indeed as the chief source for distortions and corruptions of historic fact. Plutarch had read the Encomium of the great Fabius upon his own son. Some transcripts of these eulogies may well have been preserved in great houses, but if so they mostly perished, like nearly all other records, in the great sack of Rome by the Gauls. In any case, they had no great literary value.

Cicero, Brutus, 16, 62. Livy, viii., 40, 4. Plutarch, Fabius, § 1.

390 B.C. Cf. Livy, vi., 1.

The general belief is, that the early Latins were as nearly strangers to the Muses as any people well can be. The meagre fragments offered us, certainly, are uninspired indeed. A charm for footache, to be sung thrice nine times, spitting and touching the ground, may be translated:

"Earth, take the pest to thee!
Health, tarry here with me!"

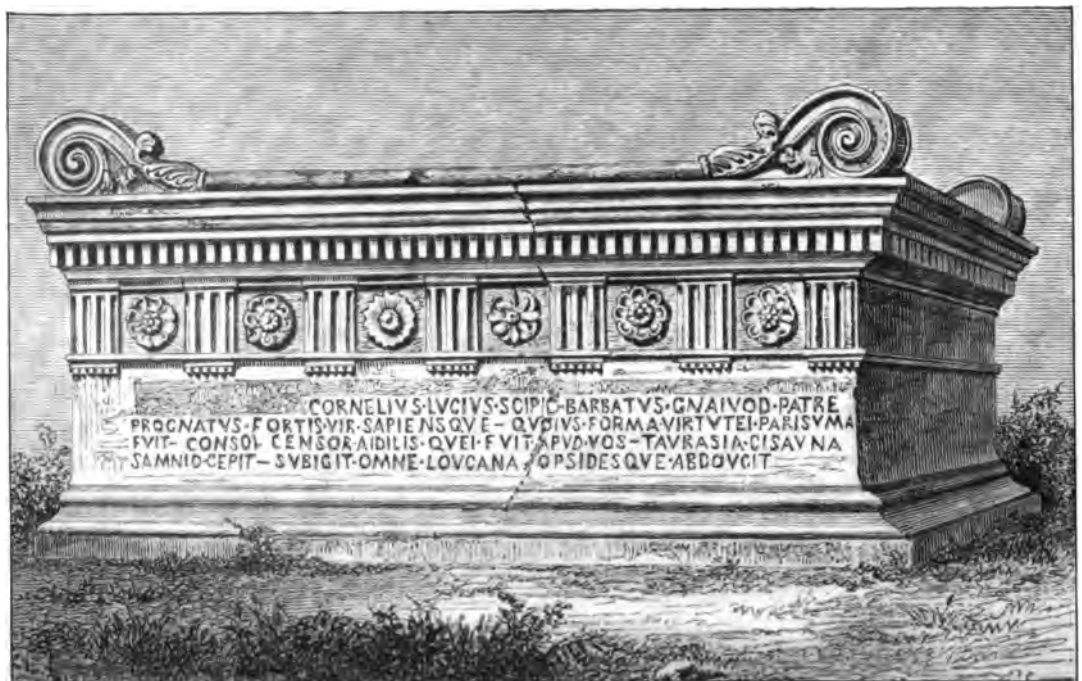
A farmer's maxim is quite as rude as our rendering:

"Winter dust and muddy spring
Big harvest, child, will surely bring."

The songs of the Fratres Arvales, and other primeval hymns, have been transmitted in a form quite unintelligible. They are chiefly appeals to the rustic gods by name, and are mere priestly incantations, uttered in spring as a blessing on the cornfields. Neither in them, nor in the versified epitaphs found in the tomb of the Scipios, is

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TOMB OF SCIPIO BARBATUS, NOW IN THE VATICAN.

From Duruy's History of Rome.

there anything like poetic fancy. A single example of these latter will be convincing:

280 B.C. Cornelius Lucius | Scipio Barbatus,
Son of a father Gnaivos, | A man both wise and valiant,
Whose form unto his nature | Was excellently fitted.
Consul, censor and ædile | He became among you,
Taurasia, Cisauna, | And Samnium he conquered,
Reduced Lucania wholly, | And hostages exacted.

The best early verse quotable is, however, an epitaph, upon a woman. It has a certain pathetic power due to its absolute simplicity.

"Stranger, I say but little: pause and read.
This is a lovely dame's unlovely tomb.
The name her parents gave was Claudia.
Her husband she did love with all her heart.
Two sons she bore him. One of these on earth
She leaves, the other under earth she laid.
Of gentle speech she was, and gracious mien.
She kept her house, span wool. All's said. Farewell."

The original of this inscription has disappeared. It may be only fair to remark, that, though archaic in some of its forms, it is not in the old Saturnian verse peculiar to earliest Latin poetry, but in Iambic trimeter, a well-known form of Greek rhythm. Of the exquisite Hellenic grace lavished, in all ages, on the dead, we have many examples in the Greek Anthology. Indeed, Professor Mommsen argues that the use of metrical epitaphs was borrowed by the Scipios and others directly from the Greeks.

Perhaps every people indulges in rude banter, and caustic wit, in such times of merriment as the harvest home and the wedding. Whether the "Fescennine license" took its name from the Etrurian town of Fescennium, or from the crude emblems of virility displayed, in Latium

as in Attica, with processional songs, at the rustic festival, is disputable. Horace's sketch is famous.

Horace, Epistles, II., 1., vss. 139-46.

"The sturdy farmers of the ancient days,
Content with little, when their grain was stored,
Relieving by a festal time their frames
And hearts that toiled in hope of rest at last,
With lads that shared their task, and faithful wife,
Offered to Earth a pig, milk to Silvanus,
And proffered to the Genius wine and flowers,
Who still is mindful of our fleeting life.
Invented so, the license Fescennine
Flung, in alternate verses, rustic gibes."

In this dialogue, naturally united with a rude instinctive mimicry all but universal, some germ of drama may be discovered. A much-discussed chapter of Livy describes the first impulse to real acting as brought to Rome by Etrurian mountebanks in 364 B.C. To the earliest form of actual plays Livy seems to give the name of *Satura*. Into the dispute over this word, and its connection, if any, with the Satyr-play, or semi-comic afterpiece of Greek tragedy, we must not enter.

Livy, vii., 2.

The banter, says Horace, grew to libellous slander, and was curbed by severe laws. This was doubtless when the city with its political factions grew up. So in Athens comedians were forbidden to name living citizens from the stage.

That the "chaffing" of the bridegroom at a Roman wedding might far exceed any modern freedom is illustrated in Catullus's Epithalamium, especially a passage beginning:

"And now not long shall silent be
Saucy Fescennine raillery."

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THE CLAUDIAN AQUEDUCT.

The Atellan farce, borrowed from Campania, was more distinctly dramatic from the first, and quite as vulgar. Stock characters, like Clown and Pantaloon, who are still Italian favorites, appear in countless variations. From the Sick Pig, Well Pig, Goat, She-ass, the subjects rise through Miser, Fisherman, Innkeeper, to Judgment of Life and Death, or even travesties on Greek myths like Marsyas, Heracles, Agamemnon. The fragments indicate that we have lost an extremely coarse vivid picture of low life. It was not avowedly realistic, the scene being always laid in Atella, a sort of typical Fooltown, like the Greek Abdera. Of idealism there is no trace.

But we must leave this region of mere surmise, to name the first professional author in Rome, another famous Appius Claudius, consul in 307 and 296 B.C. His statesmanship, and his engineering works, like the Appian Way and Claudian Aqueduct, are better remembered than his words. His speech against an ignoble peace with King Pyrrhus was preserved till Cicero's day. From his book of *Sententiæ*, or Aphorisms, in the old Saturnian verse, only three curt examples survive. One is still current:

> "Each for himself must be
> His fortune's architect."

Appius had scholarly tastes also. He it was who dropped Z from the seventh place to the end of the alphabet, thus making room for the distinction of G from C. But he seems, like his people, too busy with "graver matters" to be a producer of mere literature.

At any rate, the native Latin growth, weak or sturdy, was overwhelmed in the third century before Christ by the influence of Hellenism. From that time on we have for long centuries little or no trace of truly native poetry.

The Saturnian metre was the favorite before Greek in-

fluence brought in the classic rhythms. Its basis is a verse of three heavy or stressed syllables. Two such verses had apparently united long before to form the Greek hexameter. So too in the "Niebelungenlied" we have the measure,

"For ús in ancient légends | are mány márvels tóld."

Our nursery rhyme,

"The quéen was ín the párlor eáting bréad and hóney,"

represents the same widely used rhythm. There is, however, much variation in the actual structure of the Saturnian verse. The quantitative element seems less prominent than in the poetry written later under Greek influences. To the latter we must presently turn.

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Here as everywhere the author is constantly indebted to Schanz, "Geschichte der Römischen Litteratur" (in Müller's "Handbuch der Klassischen Alterthumswissenschaft"), a work which should by all means be recast in English. The classical scholar will, of course, turn to Wordsworth's or Allen's collection of fragments from the archaic Latin. Mommsen's history deals also, most learnedly, with literary problems. For the Saturnian metre there is an exhaustive essay by Professor Lindsay in the *American Journal of Philology*, Vol. XIV., where all the extant fragments are cited. But this whole field is given over to learned investigation and polemic discussion. If there was any real indigenous literature in Latium we shall never see it.

CHAPTER II

THE TRANSITION TO HELLENISM

THE war with Tarentum and King Pyrrhus must have brought many captive Greeks to Rome, and the influence of Pyrrhus's own superior culture and grace on the ruder Latin nature is indicated in many tales of the time. But much more was the first great war with Carthage decisive of the future. To cope with her African foe Rome had to build a series of great fleets. Sicily, long the most luxurious and splendid of Hellenic lands, was the centre of the strife, and the chief prize of the victors. From this time forward commercial relations, at least, with Greek cities must have been manifold and constant. The Latin peasant could never again return to his simple rustic life. The Roman nature still resisted these influences, indeed, for a time. Perhaps the uninspired couplet of Licinius, centuries later, is accurate enough.

282-272 B.C.

264-241 B.C.

Apud Aulum Gellium, xvii., 21, 45.

"In the *second* Punic war to Romulus' wild warlike race,
With her winged feet the Muse drew nigh, and found a resting-place."

There is a curious contrast, and a grotesque parallelism, in the beginnings of the two classic literatures: for Latin letters also offer us, first of all, an Homeric epic.

ANDRONICUS.

Livius Andronicus came to Rome as a prisoner of war, and therefore as a slave, from Grecian Tarentum,

probably in 272 B.C., being then perhaps a child of six or so. After his emancipation he gained a living by teaching Greek and Latin: though nowise learned in either. His translation of the Odyssey was made to supply the grievous lack of Latin texts. It was in rough Saturnians, and even the few fragments preserved betray at times a surprising ignorance of Homer's meaning. Yet this version appears to have been a school text-book still in Horace's boyhood. Even Aulus Gellius found an old copy in the library, and quotes for us the first line:

Horace Epist., II., 1, 69.

"*Virúm mihí, Caména, | insecé versútum.*"

The use of the purely Italian *Camena*, for Muse, is characteristic. We find also Saturn, Neptune, Mercury, etc., and this masquerade of Greek gods under Roman names has continued, especially among Homeric translators, even down to Lord Derby and William Cullen Bryant. The two score lines we have from Andronicus's work are mostly cited by the Latin grammarians. Thus to prove that *puer*, boy, was once of common gender, an appeal to Hera (Juno) as "*Sancta puer Saturni*" (holy child of Saturn) is quoted.

Why did Andronicus translate the Odyssey, not the Iliad? Probably because Odysseus's wanderings seemed to include Sicily, and even Italy. The neighboring cities of Tusculum and Prænestè claimed the hero's son by Circe, Telegonos, as their founder. The Latin version may have been as bold in translating the geographical allusions of Homer as it certainly was in dealing with his gods. The claim of the Romans to Trojan origin seems to have arisen a little later.

In 240 B.C. Andronicus produced a tragedy and a comedy. Both were translations or adaptations. The attempt was apparently made then, for the first time, to imitate the quantitative rhythms of the Greek originals.

The decided success of the performance made the fashion a permanent one for centuries. The meagre fragments of Andronicus's plays indicate a decided advance over the Odyssey version. The subjects for tragedy are taken chiefly from the Trojan cycle. His comedies were doubtless borrowed from the school of Menander and Philemon, well known to us through Plautus and Terence, but hardly anything from them survives. The boastful soldier, lineal ancestor of Falstaff and Dugald Dalgetty, appeared first on the Roman stage in Andronicus's play "Gladiolus" (The Dagger).

Livy, vii., 2.

So far as the Hellenistic tragedy in Rome is concerned, we may best say a general word on the subject at once. The five leading names are Andronicus, Nævius, Ennius, Pacuvius, Attius. These five lives successively overlap each other, and the youthful Cicero often conversed with Attius in his old age. With the latter the fashion decayed, though various later writers still composed tragedies, more or less original, rather as rhetorical exercises than for actual production in the theatre. The rise of gladiatorial sports, and the horrors of the civil wars, hastened the end.

No entire tragedy, no considerable fragments of any, survive from the republican age. In no case is it possible to restore with certainty the entire plot of a play. The attempt has indeed been made, with great learning and ingenuity, but with most uncertain results. The chief essay of this kind is by Ribbeck, in his book "The Roman Tragedy." He combines boldly, with our Latin remnants, fragments from lost Greek plays on the same subjects, the brief "fables" of a late writer Hyginus, which are thought often to show a dramatic origin, and various other hints. Ribbeck has certainly done one real service: he has made the perusal of these tantalising fragments far more interesting, and even profitable. Our knowledge of the manifold variations in the retell-

ing of the old myths is sharpened. But we shall probably never read entire one of these Græco-Roman tragedies of republican times. We possess only the group of turgid declamatory dramas bearing, perhaps rightly, the name of Seneca. But we stray from Andronicus.

Much more comes to our ears, in credible or incredible form, as to the career of this Greek freedman in Rome. On one or two occasions his processional hymns were highly honored, and performed in public to avert grave dangers from the state. Cicero chronicles a remarkable revival accorded to two of his dramas, the "Clytæmnestra" and the "Trojan Horse," with immense outlay and hundreds of performers, to inaugurate Pompey's fine stone theatre. But he is, after all, a lost author, whose importance came to him, perhaps, by good luck, as the shrewd and thrifty leader of a great transitional movement. Patronized by the great, catering to the amusements of high and low alike, he ill deserves the honored names of Roman and poet.

E.g., Livy, vii., 2.

Livy, xxvii., 37. B.C. 207.

Cicero, Ad Fam., vii., 1. B.C. 55.

NÆVIUS.

Our next author, though possibly not Roman by birth, is no hungry Greekling: a gallant soldier, not a schoolmaster and actor: not a client, but a bold critic, of the nobility.

As a playwright, he at least combined several Greek plots in one, and was the first to write serious plays also on Roman subjects, which must have been his own. Of these *fabulæ prætextatæ*, or dramas in the toga, one celebrated a victory of Marcellus over the Gauls in 222 B.C., so was as boldly up-to-date as Aischylos's "Persians," which described the fight at Salamis to an audience most of whom had beheld the struggle in the strait. Probably Nævius,

like Aischylos, merely introduced a messenger who gave an account of the battle. Indeed, the one surviving line is

"With life unburied, home with joy returned." . . .

A battle-scene like those in Shakespeare's "Henry V." would hardly have been seriously attempted by the classic dramatist.

A bolder venture still was the production of comedies with slashing allusions to political questions of the hour. Such a reference was the famous line attacking a leading family:

"Metelli for her consuls are the doom of Rome."

But our sturdy poet could not play the part of political satirist, like an Athenian Aristophanes, with impunity. Despite such ringing words as

"With the speech of liberty, at Liber's festival we'll speak,"

a consul Metellus threw Nævius into prison. Here he had the quiet sympathy of Plautus, who makes one of his Greek characters say:

206 B.C. (?)

Miles Gloriosus, vss. 212–13.

"A barbarous poet, so they tell me, props his chin upon his hand,
While a pair of guardsmen still at every hour before him stand."

Here Nævius languished, long enough to compose two dramas. Finally released by intercession of the tribunes of the plebs, he perhaps had a relapse into insolence. When Scipio had just conquered Hannibal, the ill-timed gibe was uttered:

202 B.C.

Aulus Gellius, vii., 8, 5.

"He whose deeds are now so famous, to all nations heralded,
By his father from his sweetheart's coatless once was homeward led!"

At any rate, Nævius died the next year in exile, at Utica.

201 B.C.

The work of this manly poet which we would most eagerly recover is an epic, or perhaps rather a rhythmical chronicle, of the first Punic war. The first of the seven books dealt with earlier history. Trojan Æneas's arrival in Italy was mentioned. It is interesting to note that this whole legend of Æneas's wanderings is post-Homeric. It was the invention of the later Greek poets that he wandered to Hesperia. Many discordant forms of the myth are alluded to by Dionysios the historian and others. The tale of Romulus was already fixed in popular belief. Hence in early accounts, including the poems of both Nævius and Ennius, Romulus is Æneas's son, or the son of his daughter. Cato and others discovered the gap in the chronology, of over four centuries, and a later age invented, or borrowed, to fill it up, the long line of royal Albans between the two founders. Even the love affairs of Æneas and Dido are clearly alluded to in Nævius's epic fragments. Here we touch a topic to which we shall often return: the constant indebtedness of Virgil to each and all of his forerunners.

Vide infra, p. 168.

Troy's fall, 1184 B.C.

Rome founded, 753 B.C.

The poetic value of this martial chronicle was perhaps not great. Certainly the later age, while honoring its patriotic spirit, found it crude. The Saturnian often lends itself to curt and picturesque statement.

"The Roman crossed to Malta: | from shore to shore the island
He harried, burned and ravaged, | and finished up the matter."

The very choice of the old metre does honor to Nævius's heart, probably also to his judgment. Even the half-envious Horace confesses the great popularity of the old poet still. Of course his career proves that he was no opponent of Hellenism. Indeed the very first verse invokes the Muses:

"Ye nine harmonious sisters, of Jove who are the daughters. . . ."

The release of Nævius by the tribunes indicates his full Roman citizenship. Gellius, quoting his epitaph, criticises its "Campanian haughtiness." On this slender hint his Latian birth has been denied. That Nævius himself speaks in the epigram is, of course, no proof of its authorship. It may quite as well be from the pen of Varro, who made a collection of portraits and added metrical *elogia*. Yet the spirit is no doubt Naevian. It is perhaps the last time we shall hear the old rhythm.

Gellius, 1; 24, 2.

"If it were fit immortals | for mortal men should sorrow,
Then well may the Camenæ | mourn Nævius the poet.
So since he has been added | unto the wealth of Orcus,
At Rome men have forgotten | to speak the Latin language."

If we have given this early lost poet more space than his scant remaining verses justify, it is but due to the fearless outspoken man, citizen, soldier, and artist. There are too few like him in later days. Rarely indeed does the Roman singer scorn patronage, defy the mighty, and assert the freedom or dignity of his guild.

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We are still in the region where only special students can move freely, and they only to radical disagreements. For the fragments see Bährens's "Poetæ Minores," Vol. VI., and Ribbeck's twin volumes of tragic and comic remnants. Ribbeck's volume on "Römische Tragödie" is for scholars, his "Römische Dichtung," in three parts, is intended for any general reader who is master of German. Mommsen is extremely good on this period.

CHAPTER III

AGE OF THE SCIPIOS, AND CATO

(202–133 B.C.)

Second Punic War, 218–202 B.C.

THE long duel with Carthage, or rather with the unrivalled military genius of Hannibal, brought Rome to the verge of destruction. Whether he made an error of strategy after Cannæ, or not, is a hackneyed subject. But it seems certain that, with decent support from his own nation, whether he assailed Rome directly or no, he could have made the control of Italy permanent. This is but saying that the Romans better deserved to win, because they supported the inferior skill of Fabius, Marcellus, Africanus, with harmonious untiring efforts and sacrifices. By securing the results of victory, Rome made all Italy safe from serious invasion for long centuries to come. These next seventy years are in many ways the best epoch in the history of the race.

The great leaders, above all the older Africanus and his adoptive grandson Æmilianus, enjoyed, and deserved, the full respect of their people. Foreign conquest kept the youth honorably employed, while the ever-increasing revenues from new provinces prevented suffering at home. Culture, also, came swiftly from without, but never fully Hellenized the rude persistent stock of Latin peasantry.

There were, indeed, causes for the gravest anxiety. Political corruption had already begun. The governors of the provinces often conspired with the contractors and tax-gatherers to rob their helpless subjects. In Italy the small farmers were quickly ruined by the destructive competition

of Sicily, Sardinia, Africa, the granaries of the Mediterranean world. From all parts of Italy they streamed to swell the city populace, while the tale of genuine Roman citizens was decimated by constant war.

The Scipios appear in this time as the most refined and progressive among the nobles, the friends and patrons of the new learning and of Hellenic taste, the centre of that cosmopolitan hospitality which accepted Ennius as the truest voice of his adopted city, made of the African slave-boy Terence a scholarly poet, and sent Polybios back to preach to the Greeks not sullen submission but glad acceptance of rulers worthy to be masters of the world.

Cato the Censor, 234-149, B.C.

Quite at the other extreme stands a stubborn personal enemy of the great Africanus, Cato the Censor, lauder of the better times forever past, detesting and resisting all things Hellenic or foreign with the ferocity of instinctive self-preservation. He was quite right, that whatever might await Imperial Rome, the old type of character, the old simple ways of living, could return no more.

Livy, xxxviii., 54, 1.

By a capricious freak of fortune, the one work of Cato handed down to us is his "De Re Rustica," a hopeless attempt to call to his people's attention the old beloved rustic life: and even this has been so modernized in form and expression that he would no doubt scornfully disown it. Yet it is lifted into prominence as the oldest Latin prose-work extant. Even in the revision the style reveals the man.

Old horses, or old slaves, are better got rid of by sale, or turned out to perish. Yet the "family," of perhaps a hundred, should "not suffer, be cold, nor hungry. The bailiff is to keep it busy, thus better restraining it from mischief and thieving. . . . He mustn't think he knows more than the master. . . . Seed-corn, tools, barley,

wine, oil, he must lend to no one. . . . He should be the first to get up, and the last to go to bed." At the winter fireside of Whittier's boyhood, for instance, this book would have proved far more practical than Hesiod, or the Virgilian Georgics.

Of humor, indeed, there is in Cato only the grim Scotch sort, as heard in his "Praise large farms, and take a small one." So too his chief contribution to rhetoric is "Grip the subject: words will follow." Sometimes he is near akin to Poor Richard: "What you do not need is dear at a penny." Cato is especially mentioned as an early collector of witty apophthegmata: but Roman wit is rarely convulsing.

Cicero, De Officiis, i., 29, 104.

Cato's services to literature were important, and the loss of his other works is still deplored. He was the first Roman orator to collect his own speeches. One hundred and fifty of them came down at least to Cicero, who now compels us to judge of Roman oratory from his own copious rhetoric alone. Livy praises them most warmly. As a result of any real Aristotelian inquiry into the early constitutions and social conditions of the Latin and other Italian cities, Cato's "Origines" might disappoint us. Yet the record of an older and less adorned tradition than Livy's, the fearless criticism of recent events and living statesmen, even the ideal picture of the golden age past, would have great value: Professor Schanz, echoing Niebuhr, says, a greater value than any other lost work of antiquity.

Cicero, Crutus, 17, 68.

Livy, xxxix., 40.

Gesch. Röm. Litt., p. 105.

That "Cato learned Greek at eighty" is a very misleading commonplace. He is avowedly recording for his son Marcus what he had learned in youth at Athens, when he asserts that the Greeks are "A most worthless and unteachable race. Believe that this is uttered by a prophet: whenever that folk imparts its literature, it will corrupt everything."

We cannot but return such scorn for alien folk with a hearty admiration and liking for the man who speaks thus. Especially Cato grown old, ugly, and misanthropic,

"Porcius, fiery-haired, gray-eyed, and snarling at all men,"

has as real a fascination as Samuel Johnson, or Socrates himself. Like John C. Calhoun, or some gallant French nobleman of the old régime, he steadily recedes into a past remembered by ever fewer men, but always a picturesque and unflinching leader of a lost cause.

A human heart beat in that rugged breast. In 167 B.C. a thousand leading Greeks were brought to Rome as hostages. Seventeen years later there was a tedious debate in the senate whether three hundred harmless forgotten survivors should be permitted to return. Cato gruffly cut it short: "As though we had nothing else to do, here we sit discussing whether a few old Greeks be buried here or in Achaia." Even his Homer he had read to better purpose than he confessed. When urged to move also, in the senate, for a restoration of their former civic honors, he remarked with his sour smile: "Polybios would venture back into the Cyclops' cave, because he forgot his belt and cap."

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Any of the histories will supplement the political outlines here suggested. For Cato the English reader should not forget the life in Plutarch. The genial old man in Cicero's "De Senectute" bears only the name of Cato: but in Cicero's other works there are many excellent remarks on the elder author. Nepos's brief sketch includes our best analysis of the "Origines." Livy has a careful judgment. (Book XXXIX., 40.) Aulus Gellius has preserved many details as to Cato, and the citations by Servius in his great Virgilian commentary are still more important. The rather copious remains of the "Origines" are found in Peter's "Historicorum Fragmenta," pp. 40–67. Both these and his other fragments are well edited by Keil, and the "De Re Rustica" by Jordan, in one volume with Varro's similar work.

CHAPTER IV

ENNIUS

THIS sturdy son of Rudiæ, a remote Calabrian village, used to declare that he had three hearts, which found utterance in the forgotten Oscan dialect of his clan, in Greek, the language of the street, market, and theatre throughout Magna Græcia, and in the Latin speech of his adoptive fellow-citizens. Enlisted in the Roman army, he had fought his way early, no doubt with many scars, to the rank of centurion, or head of his company: a very different career from that of a young Roman gentleman, learning the art of war as attaché on the proconsul's staff, and later given command of a legion. We may compare him perhaps to the color-sergeant of a British regiment under the older régime, when only a gentleman could buy his position in the social club of higher officers.

239–169 B.C.

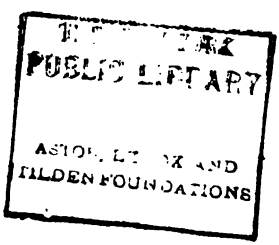
When Cato, in his thirtieth year, returning from Sardinia, brought in his train this young veteran of thirty-five, he had no suspicion what a trick fate was playing him. Beginning like Andronicus as a teacher of both languages, Ennius soon became the personal friend of the two great Scipios, Africanus and Nasica. His famous little jest at the latter's expense is, for Rome, a remarkably good one. Turned away from his friend's door, he next day—perhaps busy with Poesia and Podagra, his two most imperious guests—when Scipio knocked, shouted down stairs that he too was "not at home." To Scipio's indignant protest he retorted: "I believed your maid: do you venture to doubt even my own voice?"

Cicero, De Oratore, ii., 276.



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Though we get other glimpses of a very simple ménage, he seems to have had no quarrel with splendor, especially, like Horace, when the guest of the great. Indeed, his claim, "Only when housed by the gout do I versify," seems as disdainful of the Muse as any great Roman noble could have been. As Franklin also confessed, gout, of which Ennius died at last, is itself a luxury, unknown to the abstemious. Horace says boldly,

Epistles, I., 19, 7–10.

"E'en in the morning the Muses have mostly reeked of the wine-cup.
Homer confesses a fondness for wine by chanting its praises.
Father Ennius, too, leaped forward to sing of the battle
Never unless well drunk!"

This much at least is true, that Ennius, though accepting with delight full Roman citizenship, meddled not, like Nævius, in democratic or other politics, and without loss of self-respect, was an ever-welcome guest of the great. The accomplishments, and the tact, needed in such a station, he has described perfectly in his "Annales." We needed not the assurance of the first among Roman scholars, that Ennius was really portraying himself, in his poem, when a Roman general of an earlier day

Ælius Stilo, apud Gellium, xii., 4, 5.

"Called for a man with whom he often and gladly
Table shared, and talk, and all his burden of duties,
When with debate all day on important affairs he was wearied,
Whether perchance in the forum wide, or the reverend senate:
One with whom he could frankly speak of his serious matters,
Trifles also, and jests; could pour out freely together
Pleasant or bitterer words, and know they were uttered in safety.
Many the joys and griefs he had shared, whether public or secret!
This was a man in whom no impulse prompted to evil,
Whether of folly or malice. A scholarly man and a loyal,

Graceful, ready in speech, with his own contented and happy;
Tactful, speaking in season, yet courteous, never loquacious.
Vast was the buried and antique lore that was his, for the foretime
Made him master of earlier customs as well as of newer.
. . . Wisely he knew both when he should talk and when to be silent."

This last repeated touch perhaps hints the sore spot in a dependent's life : the duty of silence.

When Fulvius invited Ennius along on a Greek campaign, it was not as a centurion. Cato, already disenchanted, sharply reproved the taking of poets into the camp, and Cicero hints at some relation of eulogist and patron, saying Fulvius did not hesitate "To dedicate Mars' booty to the Muses."

189 B.C.

At any rate, this Calabrian villager brought to the Romans a full acceptance of Greek forms and taste. His epic is not, like Andronicus's and Nævius's, in the accentual Saturnians, but in quantitative hexameters, perhaps as Homeric as the somewhat stiff polysyllabic speech of Rome could yield to him who first moulded it in the favorite Grecian rhythm.

The subject, more ambitious than Nævius's, is frankly assumed to be the whole story of Rome. He too begins with Troy and Æneas, who, as Servius twice assures us, is still made Romulus's grandsire. Yet Ennius invokes in the first verse no Italian Camenæ, but

Servius on Aen., I., 273. and VI., 77.

"Muses who underneath your feet tread mighty Olympus."

His list of the twelve great gods is interesting in that he accepts this Hesiodic number, and is compelled to include one purely Hellenic name.

"Juno Vesta Minerva Ceres Diana Venus Mars
Mercurius Jovis Neptunus Volcanus Apollo."

The second line exemplifies also the chief difference between the earlier and the Virgilian hexameter. Final s after a short vowel, as in *Jovis*, can be suppressed at will. The statement early in the poem that Homer's soul was reincarnated in Ennius need not imply any serious belief in metempsychosis. Even as an assertion of his own Homeric genius it is not insufferable conceit.

While thus frankly Hellenic in its taste, the poem was the most adequate utterance ever attained of the characteristic Roman spirit. We have about six hundred verses altogether, perhaps a twentieth of the whole. Some passages, such as the beautiful account of Rhea Silvia's prophetic dream, extend to nearly a score of connected hexameters. Even brief fragments have often a certain completeness, as the characterization of Fabius, which we are fain to apply to Washington or Abraham Lincoln :

"Simply by biding his time, one man has rescued a nation.
Not for the praises of men did he care, but alone for our safety.
Therefore greater and greater his fame shall wax in the future."

A larger international sympathy breathes in Pyrrhus's words to the Romans :

"Gold for myself I crave not. Ye need not proffer a ransom.
Not as hucksters might do we wage our war, but as soldiers :
Not with gold, but the sword. Our lives we set on the issue.
Whether your rule or mine be Fortune's pleasure,—our mistress,—
Let us by valor decide."

In fact this light-hearted soldier of fortune, perhaps because more easily and promptly disposed of than Hannibal, was always treated with truly chivalric courtesy in Roman annals.

There are other important phases in Ennius's life-work. Indeed, though lacking in humor, and only mentioned by

courtesy, last, among the ten writers of comedy, he put all his fiery energy into his Hellenistic tragedies. Fragments of his "Medea," which Cicero calls a "word-for-word rendering from the Greek," can be profitably compared with Euripides's original. Perhaps it is as a schoolmaster that he introduced so curious and dubious a line as

> "The ship
> Called Argo, *since in her picked Argive men*
> *Were carried.*"

In general we should greatly like to compare such a Latin play, entire, with the Greek original. Yet more tantalizing are the rather copious fragments of an "Alexander," describing the day when Paris is recognized and restored to princely honors in Troy. The reconstruction of this play, by Ribbeck, with the aid of surviving verses from a Greek original also, has been measurably successful. Ennius appears to have composed at least one original Roman drama, on the happy subject of the seizure of the Sabine women.

Most of Ennius's other writings were seemingly grouped under the general name of *Saturæ*. By his time the word had probably attained nearly the meaning of Miscellanies, though there are still some fragments from lost "Satires" which indicate a dialogue, *i.e.*, a certain dramatic form.

We hear of an especial essay on Gastronomy, describing dainty dishes in rapturous language. This was a free version from Greek, as was an essay explaining away the divine myths as tales of mere human beings or natural phenomena. Indeed, this rationalizing process still bears the name of Euhemeros. Ennius has a verse, audacious for conservative Rome and his day, which is partly verified by modern philology:

> "That I mean by 'Jupiter' which among Greeks is called the air,
> That becomes, in turn, wind, cloud, rain, cold, and last thin air again."

But Ennius's chief work is certainly the "Annales." Even the remnants we have should be carefully studied by everyone who would know what is best in Latin art or life. Many citations are offered us by Macrobius expressly to show Virgil's remarkable indebtedness to this predecessor.

We are glad to be assured that this career was an active and fruitful one to the end. It was stated in the twelfth book of the "Annales" that the poet was sixty-seven when composing it, and our citations prove positively that he completed eighteen books. His epitaph on his friend Africanus is quite in the stern pagan spirit of requital:

"Here is he laid unto whom no man, be he foeman or comrade,
Ever was able to give recompense worthy his deeds."

Ennius's own memorial verse, whether from his pen or not, breathes, even in its confidence, a tone more congenial to the modern mind:

"None shall honor my funeral rites with tears or lamenting:
Why? Because still do I flit, living, from lip unto lip."

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The dramatic fragments of Ennius are found in Ribbeck's "Tragicorum," the other remains in Bährens. See also the monograph by Lucian Müller. For a selection, with notes, see Merry's "Fragments of Roman Poetry." This useful little book gives also some hint of Ribbeck's method in reconstructing lost plays.

The copious chapter on Ennius by Sellar in his "Roman Poets of the Republic" is illustrated with versions of the chief fragments, and is perhaps the most spirited in the whole standard work.

CHAPTER V

PLAUTUS

(250–184 B.C.)

TITUS MACCIUS PLAUTUS, chief author of extant Latin comedies, indeed our principal source for early and colloquial Latin, was doubtless somewhat Ennius's senior. We have met as yet no Roman writer who, by pure creative imagination and devotion to the highest creative ideals of art, fully deserves the Greek name of poet. Least lofty of all is this figure.

Plautus or Plotus meant in Umbria "flat-foot." Maccus is a stock character of the old rustic farce,—like Pantaloon or Clown. The names are too fitting to be accidental: clownish and unbuskin'd indeed is his art. He was a native of Umbrian Sarsina, the last Italian town to submit to Rome, hence not at all a centre of the new culture.

Plautus in Rome was at first a servant to actors, later an unsuccessful roving trader, then a helper in a mill, finally a playwright. Few careers could be humbler, from the Roman point of view. The chief actor of the troop or "herd" was usually a freedman at best, his company all or mostly slaves. Their employment was a social stigma unfitting them even for military service. They were, like mountebanks at our country fairs, under the special surveillance of the police, who administered vigorous floggings, either for poor performance or for any audacity toward those in high station. In fact, drama in

Gellius, III., 3, 14.

republican Rome was simply a free show and vulgar amusement at popular festivals, attended by entire families. Disorder and inattention were the rule. Hissing, or applause, or even largesse thrown to the actors, meant for them failure or success. In the former case, even the playwright lost the modest fee expected from the magistrates who held the games. Of competition, or real prizes, we hear nothing.

Plautus's familiarity with Greek speech he shared to a great extent with his hearers of high and low degree, if we may judge by the bilingual puns, etc., freely introduced. He may have improved his knowledge on his journeyings. Sailors have a notorious fondness for the theatre, and for other forms of diversion only too freely portrayed in these comedies. Certainly there is nothing scholarly in him; and we have the detailed statement of Gellius that Roman comedy generally did but roughen and blur the finer originals.

Gellius, N., 23.

Inadequate as are our fragments of the Attic Middle and New Comedy, they quite bear out Gellius's strictures. While the Plautine plots, characters, main lines of dialogue, and finer humor, are unmistakably Greek, some more or less amusing "gags," allusions to Roman conditions and recent events, show Plautus's own homely mother-wit. Swift action, lively dialogue, above all a racy, vigorous Latin style, we may also owe in large part, or wholly, to him.

There is, however, a further difficulty. We do not have the plays as Plautus taught them to his actors. In particular, few if any of the prologues date from his time. It will be seen, therefore, that his name, though not quite so uncertain as Homer's, covers in a vague fashion a large mass of Græco-Roman drama, borrowed from decadent Athens in the first place, and recast without scruple as often as each play was revived after his day.

Yet again, Varro, the learned antiquarian of Cicero's time, found in circulation as "Plautine" the incredible number of one hundred and thirty comedies, *i.e.*, nearly the whole mass of early Latin drama. Twenty-one of these, Varro found, had been accepted by all previous critics. Nineteen others he himself thought genuine. Our MSS. contain twenty, and large fragments of another, the "Vidularia." The natural inference, that we have Varro's first class, is very probably true, but hardly proven.

Gellius, III., 3, 11.

The scene is always laid in a Greek city, often Athens. The chief character is usually an audacious, tricky slave: quite enough, in itself, to show that the Romans accounted this drama as neither realistic nor of serious importance, for the Roman slave of real life was held in sterner subjection. The slave is most often engaged in embezzling, from his owner or otherwise, money for the profligate and spendthrift "young master." The latter is generally in love with some damsel of low degree and questionable character, who pretty regularly proves at last to be a great heiress, kidnapped in childhood.

Of course by no means all the comedies contain just this series of incidents. Yet such was clearly the line along which popular favor, and freedom from official disapproval, could be most securely won, in Rome as in Athens. Hence the hackneyed character of nearly all the plays. The masks, in Terence even the names, would often fit one old man or youth, villainous slave or parasite, as well as another. The parasite, or hanger-on in wealthy houses, is the chief comic character, always hungry, generally unscrupulous, constantly a butt of coarsest ridicule.

Naturally, we shall have most to say of the few plays which rise out of this mass into something like originality and interest. The prologue of the "Captives" makes strenuous claim to such distinction.

"'Twill, sure, be worth your while to note this play.
'Tis made with care, not as the others are,
With no foul lines, unfit to be recalled.
Here is no perjured pander, shameless woman,
Nor braggart soldier."

Captivi, vss. 54-58.

And again at the close:

"This our comedy, spectators, is for honest morals made . . .
Rarely do the poets fashion such a comedy as this,
Where the good are rendered better."

Vss. 1029 ff.

Though hardly deserving Lessing's extravagant praise as the best of all comedies, the play really is romantic and rather ennobling in tone.

But the audience no doubt better enjoyed the Epilogue of the "Asinaria:"

"If behind his goodwife's back this old man had a little fun,
Nothing new or strange he did, nor different from the common run.
If you wish to beg him off and save him from his cudgelling
This by loud applause you'll have no trouble in accomplishing."

Vss. 942 ff.

This finale, mingling with the acted scene the real fears of the slavish player, gives a lively glimpse into the ignoble theatrical conditions.

Perhaps the most amusing character is the Braggart Soldier. He appears accompanied by his rather weary flatterer Artotrogos (Breadeater), who rehearses the numbers he has slain. The soldier's name, "Castlecityconqueror," is of course itself absurd.

"*Soldier:* What is the grand sum total?
Flatterer: Seven thousand!
Soldier: So many should it be. You reckon well.

Miles Gloriosus, vss. 46 ff.

Flatterer: Why, in Cappadocia, at a single blow
You had slain five hundred, but—your sword was dull.
Soldier: Poor wretched infantry, I let them live.
Flatterer: Why say what all men know, that on the earth
You only, Pyrgopolinikes, live
In valor, beauty, deeds, unconquer'dest?
All women love you: and good reason too:
You are so handsome: like those yesterday
That plucked my cloak.
Soldier: (Eagerly) What did they say to you?
Flatterer: They asked me: 'Is this Achilles?' So said one.
'Yes, 'tis his brother,' said I. Then the other:
'Well, he is handsome, surely;' so she said:
'And noble. See how well his hair becomes him.
Happy those women are with whom he wives.'
Soldier: Did they say so?
Flatterer: Why yes! Both made me swear
To-day I'd bring you in procession by.
Soldier: To be too handsome is a piteous thing!"

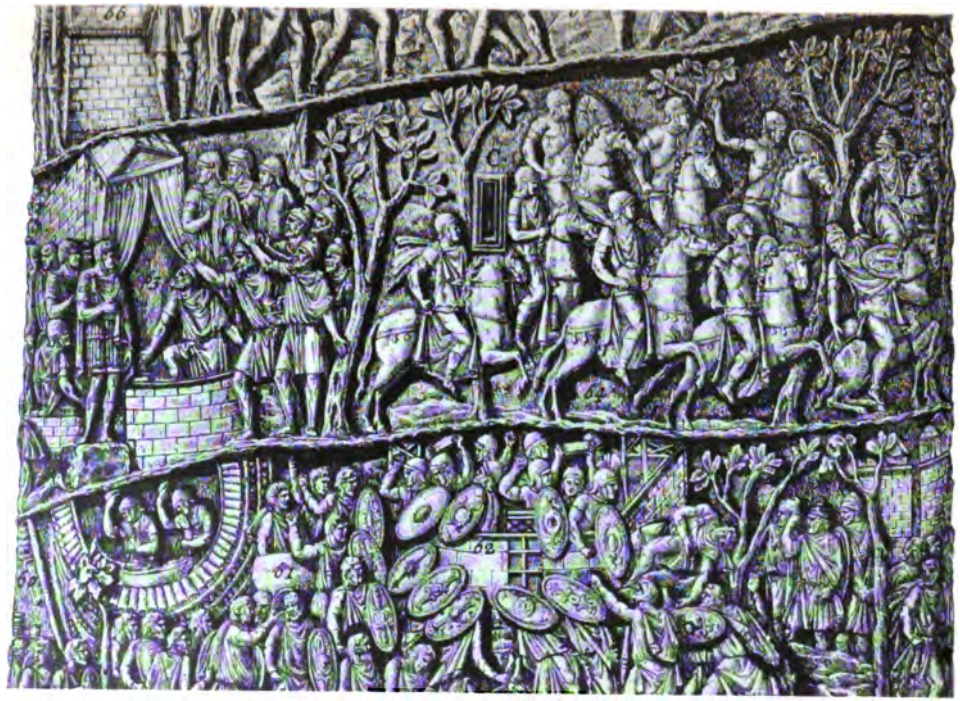
The cowardice, brutality, and lawless desires of this hero having been duly laid bare, we have no objections when he is cudgelled, ridiculed, even defrauded, in the finale. He has none of Falstaff's wit and good humor to win our liking in spite of us. But neither is there any other character in the play who calls out our deeper sympathy.

The best of the prologues, that of the "Trinummus," refusing to betray the plot, says:

Trinummus, vss. 17 ff.

"The old men coming yonder will make clear
The story. In Greek, 'Thesaurus' it was called.
Philemon wrote it. Plautus, rendering it
In barbarous speech, called it Trinummus. . . .
That's all. Farewell. In silence now attend."

One of the "old men" is coming out of his own house-



ROMAN WARFARE.

Relief from the Trajan column.


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door, and speaks three lines to his wife within, the fourth as he gets out of her hearing:

Vss. 39-42.

"I beg you with a garland crown our Lar,
Goodwife, and pray that this our dwelling-place
Be prosperous, happy, blest and fortunate:
—And that I presently may find you dead."

Such merry jests on wedded misery, evidently brought down the house, and are as much stock material as our gibes at stepmothers or mothers-in-law.

Another type still familiar is thus satirized: it is the gossips

Vss. 203-9.

". . . Who, knowing nothing, claim to know it all.
What each intends, or will intend, they know.
What in the queen's ear the king said, they know.
They know what Juno chatted of with Jove.
What never was or is,—they know it, though."

The "Trinummus" is the cleanest of all the Plautine plays: partly because no feminine characters appear at all.

The best plot, however, is the "Captives," already mentioned. Two young men, master and slave, from Elis, have been taken prisoners in war by the Ætolians. They exchange names and characters, so when their purchaser, old Hegio, allows the servant to go home and negotiate an exchange with Hegio's own captive son, it is really the master who escapes. This deception is unwittingly betrayed by still another Elean prisoner, who knows them both well. Angry old Hegio loads chains and hardships on the heroic slave. But the young master presently returns with Hegio's son, to conclude the exchange. He brings also the startling news, that his valiant slave-comrade, who is suffering in his stead, is himself another son of Hegio, stolen in infancy by a rascally slave. The latter is brought along to

confess, and is hurried off to the hangman while all else ends happily.

This is a really moving melodrama, enlisting our sympathy strongly for the captives and slaves. There is a vulgar parasite, as usual, and some unusually stupid jesting. We are tempted to charge all such details to Plautus, and the finer features to the Greek original. At any rate, the romantic play helps us to understand why Menander and his school looked to Euripides, not to Aristophanes, as their great progenitor. This plot is quite as tragic, in the early sense of the word, as Euripides's Tauric Iphigenia, or even the Sophoclean Philoctetes. Those two great fifth-century dramatists, however, probably dared not put upon the tragic scene a frankly contemporaneous story. The fourth-century comedy had no such fears. Yet we seem almost to hear an echo of Antigone's voice when the slave-captive, after the trick is detected, faces his father's threats of torture with noble disdain.

Captivi, vss. 682-88.

"Since for no sin I fall, little I reck.
If he, who promised, comes not, and I die,
This will be counted honor still, in death,
That I from servitude and hostile hands
Restored my master to his home and father;
And here I rather chose to put my life
In peril, than that he should be destroyed."

Virgil, most constant and ingenious of imitators, may have taken the cue for a notable speech of Neoptolemos from Hegio's mocking retort:

Virgil, Aen., ii., 547-49.

"Enjoy that glory, then, in Acheron!"

The Plautine "Menæchmi" is the undoubted original for Shakespeare's "Comedy of Errors": and is less incredible, since only *one* pair of long-parted and indistinguishable twin brothers dodge each other on and off the scene. So the "Aulularia," or Pot of Gold, is the avowed prototype

of Molière's "L'Avare," and less directly of other misers on many a modern comic stage.

One striking lack in Plautus, to a student familiar with the Aristophanic comedy, is the Chorus. There is really only one scene in all the twenty plays where anything of the sort can be traced. That is in the "Rudens," and the choir of disconsolate fishermen are curiously useless, adding at best only a bit of local color to a scene of shipwreck. As an elegy on Fisherman's Luck it has a certain pathos of its own.

"Most wretched in every way is the life of men who are poverty stricken;
And especially those who have learnt no trade, who are destitute of employment.
Whatever they happen to have in the house, they perforce therewith are contented.
But as for ourselves, how wealthy we are you may judge pretty well by our costume,
These hooks that you see, and bamboo poles, are our means for attaining a living;
And every day from the city we come, to secure a subsistence, hither.
Instead of gymnastics and boyish games, this toil is our exercise only.
Sea-urchins and limpets we strive to secure, with oysters and scallops and cockles;
The nettles as well, in the sea that dwell, and the striped crabs and the mussels.
And among the rocks after that with our hooks and lines we go a-fishing,
To capture our food from out of the sea. But if no luck is our portion,
And we catch no fish, then, salted ourselves, well drenched with the briny water,
To our homes we go, and slink out of sight, and to bed without any supper,
And unless we have eaten the cockles we caught, our dinner has been no better."

Lastly we may quote a passage or two of a prologue which is certainly not from Plautus's pen. But for an allusion in it to Carthage as still existent, indeed, the language would bring it down nearly to Varro's own day. It was written for a revival of the "Casina," a most foul and brutal play. The writer faces frankly certain natural criticisms by his audience.

Casina Prologue.

"Some here, methinks, will say among themselves,
'Prithee, what's this? A wedding among slaves?
A strange thing this to play, that's nowhere done!'
I say, in Carthage this *is* done, and Greece,
And, of our country, in Apulia too.
Ay, servile marriages more carefully
Are celebrated than a freeman's there."

But we cite this intelligent later critic, here, for the most favorable view that can be given of Plautine comedy, as a harmless, cheerful pastime for a festal day. Nearly all his words we can echo cordially, provided we may turn away from the "Casina" to such melodramas as the "Captives" and "Trinummus":

"The men who drink old wine I count as wise,
And those that gladly hear an ancient play.
Since antique words and phrases please you well,
An old-time drama should delight you more.
For the new comedies, that now appear,
Are even more debased than these new coins.
Now we have hearkened to the People's cry,
That you desire to hear the Plautine plays,
And so bring out this ancient comedy.
. . . All dramas it surpassed when acted first.
The flower of poets still were living then,
Though now departed whither all must pass. . . .
And with full earnestness we beg you all
Kindly to give attention to our troop.

Cast from your minds your cares and debts away.
Let no one stand in terror of his dun.
'Tis holiday. The banks keep holiday.
'Tis peace. The forum has its halcyon days. . . ."

If the passages here cited make the general sketch of Plautus's art seem too unfavorable, it must be remembered that they are deliberately chosen as "purple patches," not as fairly typical extracts. The importance of these comedies to linguistic students cannot be overrated. They are our chief resource for that colloquial Latin—overshadowed but never eradicated by the literary idiom from Cicero to Quintilian—from which the Romance languages derive their origin. But as fine art, or even as original creations, they fall under a deadlier test.

Still, though the plots are nearly all ignoble, sometimes too debasing to be outlined, the ordinary tone of the dialogue is much purer than, *e.g.*, Aristophanes's. Of Plautus himself we get a rather agreeable impression as a merry, kind-hearted man of homely wit and shrewd practical judgment. Our quarrel is with the ignoble life and morality which had evidently been set forth in the Attic New Comedy, and which was not bettered when its graceful scenes were "butchered to make a Roman holiday." For young readers we may pronounce the "Captivi" desirable, the "Trinummus" harmless, the "Miles" and "Menæchmi" coarse but amusing. For the rest a few extracts, like the exquisitely poetical prologue and stirring scene of the shipwreck in the "Rudens," may well suffice.

When we remember that Menander and Philemon beheld the meteoric career of Alexander, that Plautus lived through the terrible strain and stress of the Hannibalic invasion, we realize that such art as this must be quite divorced from the real and serious life of a nation or an age.

To Gellius, often quoted already, we owe the preserva-

tion of the epitaph, but we share his doubts, despite Varro's assurance, whether the genial fun-maker-in-chief for the Roman populace composed for himself these three conceited and rather awkward hexameters:

"Since he has passed to the grave, for Plautus Comedy sorrows.
Now is the stage deserted; and Play, and Jesting, and Laughter,
Dirges, though written in numbers yet numberless, join in lamenting."

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The Bohn translation of Plautus is quite faithful enough. But the study of ancient comedy should begin, of course, with some such drama of Aristophanes as the "Clouds," "Birds," or "Frogs," preferably in Frere's or Rogers's brilliant versions. The large element of realism in Euripides, which made later comedy regard him as the true master, can be best seen in the "Alkestis." The meagre fragments of Menander's school can hardly be treated in English at all. An essay upon that group, by the present author, will be found in the Warner "Library" under Philemon. The method of approach through Aristophanes here indicated is well illustrated by the most helpful volume on Plautus and Terence, by Rev. W. L Collins, in the series of Ancient Classics for English Readers.

A volume is to be desired which shall render faithfully as much of Plautus as can be profitably read by students in English. It could contain three or four plays all but entire, connected scenes from others, mere bits from many.

Readers of French may profitably compare the general plot, and even particular scenes and speeches, of Molière's "L'Avare" with the "Aulularia." The "Comedy of Errors" is of course available for a similar comparison with the "Menæchmi." The serious student of comparative literature or modern drama can extend this paragraph indefinitely.

CHAPTER VI

TERENCE AND HIS FRIENDS

THE superior popularity of comedy in Rome is attested by a passage in the prologue of Plautus's "Amphitruo." Mercury announces the play, which is a clever but irreverent burlesque on the serious Aischylean drama, as a tragedy. When the spectators "knit their brows" over this, he compromises, and finally calls it a tragicomedy: "with every verse the same."

We hear of no exclusively tragic writers, but at least three authors are known through comedies alone. Despite Gellius's severe judgment, Cæcilius, the second of the three, was popular enough to produce on the stage forty comedies. All are lost. The fragments generally are rough, comparatively uninteresting, and meagre.

Gellius, II., 23.

Cæcilius was long the housemate, perhaps a protégé, of Ennius. His most interesting scene is the last one recorded of his own life. The young and unknown alien Terentius Afer, having the audacity to offer a comedy, called "Andria," the ædiles required him to take it first of all to the veteran Cæcilius for a critical judgment. The old author was dining. After the first few lines were heard the humble youth was bidden to leave his low reading-stool and join the guests at table as a welcome equal. The prompt and generous approval of the elder playwright assured the youth a favorable hearing. His play was acted two years or so later.

Statius Cæcilius, † 168 B.C.

Cæcilius was himself an Insubrian Kelt by origin, Ter-

ence an African of some Libyan clan. Both had come to Rome as prisoners and slaves, like Andronicus. From such curious sources were recruited the leading men of letters, in Rome, at the proudest epoch of her history.

Terence died before he was thirty, but completed, and produced, within seven years, six comedies. All are translations from Menander or Apollodoros, leading authors of the Attic "New Comedy," though once a single scene from Diphilos was inserted. *Contaminatio*, or combination of portions from two similar dramas, is also avowed in the prologues. In these plays we find no allusions to Roman matters, little which Menander might not have said. We miss the swift, rollicking action of Plautus. Even the easy, rough lyric rhythms have all but vanished, leaving merely polished conversation.

† 159 B.C.

167-160 B.C.

The general picture portrayed is invariably the ignoble, commonplace city life already too familiar from Plautus. In every play the "love affair" is a vulgar intrigue. Not one of the plots can be frankly explained to-day. The stock types—the lying, knavish slave, the gullible father, the youthful spendthrift, the hungry parasite, and worse characters—pass constantly across the stage. "Nothing is uttered now not said before," confesses the poet in a frank prologue. The very names grow hackneyed. There are indeed some realistic character-sketches, like the "Self-tormentor," effective contrasts, like the "Brothers," of whom one is a rustic, the other a city gentleman.

But all this is undoubtedly the Greek author's property, and we have even the masterly criticism of Cæsar, to the effect that Terence is but a *half*-Menander, offering us the Athenian's grace without his force. Cicero, too, speaks of his "weakened effects." We cannot wonder that such an artist repeatedly failed to hit the taste of his popular audience. A translator, who added nothing, and even

missed the true dramatic force of his original, we might be ready to call him.

Yet this, even if essentially true, would be most inadequate and misleading. Terence despised the popular taste. To Plautus and other predecessors he alludes with courteously veiled disdain, or at least with fearless confidence, in the curiously boyish and self-conscious series of prologues to these six adaptations. This African youth, just now a slave, was on terms of intimacy with the foremost Romans of that great age. The largest, noblest, most open-minded man of the time was doubtless Æmilianus, or, as he is oftener called, Africanus the Younger, the future destroyer of Carthage, whose friendship with Lælius is so prominent in Cicero's pair of famous essays, "De Senectute" and "De Amicitia." With these two, and their whole circle, the youthful freedman was on terms of intimacy, perhaps of social equality. That they actually collaborated in these translations is a charge which he had no desire, very likely no power, to deny.

Fall of Carthage, 146 B.C.

Adelphoe, Prol., vss. 15–21.

"Certain maligners say, that noble men
Assist and share in what the poet writes.
What they consider as a grave reproach
He counts high honor, if he pleases them
Who please you and the people, one and all:
Whose aid in war, in peace, in business life,
No man so proud but at his need accepts!"

This description could fit only Scipio Æmilianus, but is not excessive for him who, born the son of Macedonia's conqueror, had passed by adoption into the house of the victor over Hannibal. Though strange, it seems clearly true, that his innermost social circle was absolutely free from all prejudice against race or previous station.

The greatest alien ornament, probably, of that circle was a noble Greek, who had been Scipio's tutor, and was his

life-long friend: Polybios, largest-minded and most statesmanlike of Greek historians. His father had been chief of the Achaian league, the last hope of Greek union and freedom. Polybios came to see, and taught his countrymen, that provincial security under Rome was better than the old turbulent life of liberty. Four or five haughty states learned, like Macedonia, the same bitter lesson in that same generation. In the Scipionic circle the large responsibilities of world-empire, the common interests of man, were fit subjects for freest table-talk.

So when, in the performance of the "Self-tormentor," was heard the famous verse

> "I am a man: naught human I account
> Alien to me,"

the audience which rose and cheered may well have heard behind the words a more potent voice than either Terence's or Menander's.

Lælius, like his friend, was a polished speaker and writer, at home in both languages. There is an anecdote of him that once, coming late to dinner from his study, he quoted in apology, to his wife, a fine poetical passage just composed. That passage now stands in the Terentian comedy mentioned a moment ago.

The evidence, it will be noted, is much more substantial than in the Baconian controversy. To many it seems convincing. It must be remembered, that almost any given passage in Terence *may*, for all we know, be wholly absent from the Greek original. We are sure that at least the characters and plots were borrowed: but that is nearly all we can positively assert.

Now, in Terentian comedy we discover easy grace of manners in nearly all characters, the utmost courtesy, even real humanity of spirit, frequent wide though light-hearted glimpses at life, literature, and philosophic thought.

Above all, we find the colloquial Latin style risen at a bound to the highest level it ever attained. Ennius, in tragedy and occasionally in his dactylic annals, has a far more sonorous voice, a statelier stride. Such triumphs of labored literary skill as Cicero's long sweeping period: e.g., *Rem publicam, Quirites, vitamque vestrum omnium, bona, fortunas, conjuges liberosque vestros . . . .*, are yet to come. The fiery thrust of Catullus's hendecasyllables, the haunting melancholy of a Virgilian hexameter—these are inimitable creations of the artist's unique genius. But such conventions and graces of speech as can be copied, as have in fact been echoed, down to the present moment, in the Romance speech of four or five courteous, sensitive, self-conscious peoples—these appear largely, once for all, in the Latin of Terence's plays.

Year after year the boys of Westminster play these decadent Græco-Roman comedies to an audience that would not tolerate in English the immoralities of Congreve and Farquhar, and they also mimic Terence's style, in original Latin compositions, to enact on the same stage the most ludicrous events of their own school life. In fact, wherever spoken Latin is still an elegant accomplishment, Terence supplies the ultimate source, the most approved model. At least, his humble name must always remain carven over the fountain. In all modern literature his dramatic art is imitated.

Whatever the authorship, these pages have the delicate charm, the fascination, of a perfect mastery in choice and use of words. We may still try the same test to which rough old Cæcilius so promptly succumbed. The first scene of the "Andria" is a mere chat between a suspicious old Athenian master and an obsequious slave. The "young master," Pamphilus, has refused to accept the bride selected for him. A little adventuress from the island of Andros, a grievous disturber of respectable social life generally, has

long been suspected as the real obstacle to the wedding, though Pamphilus has never seemed devoted, nor a favorite of hers. But the real facts have just come out. The Andrian, Chrysis, has recently died. At her funeral and cremation has been seen, for the first time in public, her shy and lovely younger sister, Glycerium; and Pamphilus's complete devotion to her was there unmistakable.

At this point the essential outlines of the plot can be safely guessed. Glycerium will prove to be the long-lost sister of the unwelcome bride, the latter will cheerfully accept Pamphilus's friend as consolation prize, two weddings will be announced at "*Plaudite.*"

And yet we defy the cynic actually to peruse that single scene without a hundred tender thoughts for this anxious father of a wayward son, for the unwedded lovers whose child is born a few days later, even for the wretched girl who was that day cremated. The appeal is to universal feelings.

"Andria" vss. 106–12.

"There too my son
Along with Chrysis' former lovers came,
Sharing the funeral. He meantime was sad,
Shed an occasional tear. I was well pleased.
'If he, because of slight acquaintance, takes
Her death so much to heart,'—so ran my thought,—
'What if he had loved her? What will this youth do
For me, who am his father?'"

In general, Terence's people are very unfit folk for our friendship or respect, yet we are not much the worse, and sometimes distinctly the better, for meeting them.

Terence, having none of Horace's fondness for over-elaboration of his phrase, is especially available for easy quotation. Many of his "jewels five words long" live on the lips of men who barely know his name. John Winthrop, indeed, most stainless and austere of Puritans, distinguishing his own notions of pious liberty from its base counter-

feit, gives due credit to Terentius for the sentiment "*Omnes sumus licentia deteriores*": (We all by license are debased). The real master, Athenian Menander, lives almost solely through general and moral truths, cited in hardly less serious spirit by the moralists of later antiquity: perhaps Terence also will continue to preach his mild and humane ethics, in fragmentary verses, ages after his plays are lost forever, It will matter little whether the thought, or the phrase, was first struck out by a world-weary Athenian of the fourth century, a Roman statesman of the second, or by the short-lived African slave-boy whose name it will bear.

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Terence is, of course, represented in the Bohn Library, sharing a volume, rather quaintly, with Phædrus the fabulist. Among interesting recent revivals of the plays was a performance of the "Phormio" at Harvard, for which Professor M. H. Morgan furnished an excellent text, and a careful translation richly spiced with recent slang.

CHAPTER VII

LOST WORKS AND AUTHORS OF THE REPUBLICAN PERIOD

THE happy epoch of the Scipios, already characterized, is generally felt to close abruptly with the tragic death of Tiberius Gracchus. This first blood shed in civic strife was the foreshadowing of a turbulent century, which ended in the avowed failure of senatorial and popular government, and the enthronement of an autocratic master. We may indeed select the date 88 B.C. for the actual breaking down of the old conditions. Certainly after Marius and Sulla had alternately proscribed and massacred all their personal enemies, only the shell of the former social order remained. For several decades previous to that time, however, literature had languished, and at the advent of the first century before Christ we may well cast a glance backward.

Murder of T. Gracchus, 133 B.C.

Battle of Actium, 31 B.C.

As to the ages before Nævius, our utter poverty is but shared with the Ciceronian time itself: on a previous page the belief has been expressed that little or no real poetry had ever sprung out of the rugged barren soil of Latian life and character.

Supra, p. 4.

But from Nævius to Cicero the lover of literature traverses a region of fragmentary ruins, or desolate sites, unlike any section of Hellenic story, unless it be the period of early lyric. It is indeed a capricious fate that tosses us two bundles stuffed with Græco-Italic comedies, of complex

and questioned authorship, unfit to be frankly discussed in the hearing of youth,—and old Cato's manual for the management of a Campanian farm.

Our regrets deepen to dismay if we are convinced, as the present author is convinced, that the best qualities of Roman character were lost in that century of domestic bloodshed, and that the sturdy earlier traits had, in all likelihood, already stamped themselves upon works, in prose and verse, fully worthy and adequate to reveal the masterful spirit of the race.

133-31 B.C.

The epic of Nævius, even the "Annales" of Ennius, if put into our hands to-day, would no doubt seem rough indeed, compared with the Georgics or the Æneid. The orations of Cato had little of Cicero's fluent and copious diction, perhaps also a less transparent clearness of construction and style. The "Origines" would reveal little of the Livian or Herodotean charm. Possibly, as works of art, these books would not appeal to the æsthetic critic at all: but the Roman heart of oak, the sturdy spirit that tired out a Hannibal at last, and imposed the heavy yoke of servitude upon a fiercely resisting world, must have throbbed and breathed in such utterances of such men.

The "De Rerum Natura," the "Atys," the Æneid, the "Pro Archia," the picturesque pages of Livy, and even the cynical etchings of Tacitus, are all the work of men wholly cut off from political hopes or patriotic pride, seeking in literature a lofty consolation, steeped to the lips in the best Greek art, never sure how often any happy phrase or rhythmic harmony was their own, how far an echo from the diviner music of Hellas. Some or all of these later Roman works the world accepts among its masterpieces. Yet such later artists would hardly have touched, nor could they rightly interpret, the hearts of the Fabii and the Marcelli of old.

The loss of the Græco-Latin tragedies is less deplorable,

yet also grave. In certain cases we would get a doubly clear cross-light on Roman scholarship and taste, because the Greek originals are in our hands. A curious bit of philology inserted by Ennius early in the "Medea" has been mentioned. We may add that he suppressed the first two verses of the Greek play altogether, doubtless because his age knew the "Smiting Rocks" of the myth to be unreal. Since these liberties are taken at the very beginning of a version whose literalness is emphasized by Cicero, we may suppose that the Latin renderings usually reflected the tastes of a Roman translator, manager, and audience.

Supra, p. 36.

Pacuvius, a nephew, and, like Cæcilius, a protégé, of Ennius, was apparently also an adapter, or free translator, of Greek tragedies. Cicero, who accords him the highest success among all Romans in this craft, does not hesitate to declare roundly: "In this Pacuvius is better than Sophocles, in whose play Ulysses laments pitifully over his hurt"—while in Pacuvius's drama that wisest man of Greece, when wounded, "laments not in excess, but quite moderately." Such bold canons of art might produce something more valuable than a mere translation. Pacuvius was not only both tragedian and painter, but a writer of *Saturæ:* a definition of which genre we again hesitate to offer.

220 B.C.–145 B.C. (?)

Tusculan Disput., II., 21, 49.

When the young Attius reads his "Atreus" to the veteran Pacuvius, we are reminded of the first step in Terence's career. The titles show that Attius also is still serving up, to languid Roman audiences, the outworn myths of Hellas, heroic or divine. The opening lines of Euripides's "Phoinissai," occurring among his fragments, indicate his scope also as a rather free translator. His ideas of *Contaminatio* permitted him, however, to combine with Sophocles's "Antigone,"

Gellius, xiii., 2, 2.

Supra, p. 49.

or "Philoctetes," suggestions from other Greek plays on these favorite themes.

But the most significant fact of all is, that with Attius tragedy not only culminated, but practically perished also. He lived to see the beginnings of those gladiatorial sports and lavish pageants against whose fatal attractiveness for the vulgar eye and ear Horace protests with such humorous sincerity. This gave the *coup de grace* to tragedy as a popular diversion. We hear of later dramas occasionally as written, rarely as acted. Augustus counted it to himself as a merit, that his own much-elaborated Ajax finally "fell upon the sponge": a witty allusion to the Salaminian hero's suicide.

Strangest of all is the failure of the Romans to encourage, and preserve, the original dramas on native and patriotic themes, like Attius's "Brutus." The two chief fragments of this play, preserved by Cicero, offer us a dream of King Tarquin, and its explanation by the seers, who predict his dethronement. The former passage seems clearly suggested by Atossa's dream in Aischylos's "Persians." It runs:

Cf. Aischylos's Persians, vss. 181–99.

> "When at the night's command I gave my frame
> To rest, calming with sleep my wearied limbs,
> Toward me, in dream, it seemed a shepherd drove
> A fleecy flock, of beauty wonderful:
> And that I chose therefrom two kindred rams,
> And sacrificed the fairer of the twain.
> But then his brother with his horns assailed
> And butted me, who thus was overthrown.
> Falling, severely wounded, on the earth
> Supine, a wondrous mighty miracle
> In heaven I saw:—the sun's bright radiant orb
> Gliding, with course unwonted, to the right!"

This is an unusually good piece of dignified and free-handed imitation. We get the decided impression that

such dramatic attempts were almost as artificial, imitative, alien, as those on Greek themes. Though comedy, in some form, may seem rooted in the universal instinct of mimicry, serious drama is the rare production of many favorable conditions united. Possibly it requires not only the genius of single creators, and the uplifting force of an heroic age, like Shakespeare's, Corneille's, or Schiller's, but also an audience in deep and earnest sympathy with the artist's aims. One at least of two alternatives we must accept. Either there was no room for drama as a serious influence in the life and education of the Roman people, or there was no body of patriotic legend sufficiently familiar and dear to make effective appeal to them. Possibly both these negatives may well be ventured.

Of a native and original comedy, *Fabula togata*, we caught a glimpse under Nævius. It seems to have had a brief and precarious life. Mommsen does not believe that the scene was ever permitted to be Rome itself, though the titles and scanty fragments indicate at least a Latian local setting and color. But this whole movement has vanished quite as completely as the old Atellan farce. Only one ignoble fragment extends to five lines. The very names of the poets, Titinius, Atta, Afranius, are forgot, their date uncertain.—To serious Roman drama we shall return only once, under Seneca.

LUCILIUS

(180–103 B.C.)

Lucilius's reckless productivity is rather maliciously dilated on by Horace. Yet of his thirty rolls or "books" surprisingly little that is quotable, or valuable, remains. *Saturæ*, with him at least, are merely written to be read, though the form of dialogue is not infrequent. The metres vary. The general aim is a good-humored, half-cynical, rather frankly subjective view of the political and social

world in all its phases. Such a direct and avowed "criticism of life" is not true poetry. In general the *Satura* seems by this time not remote from Horace's or Johnson's use of the term. As this is the one literary type constantly claimed as a purely Roman creation, we regret the loss of Lucilius, though nearly every word we have of his is on the smooth levels of commonplace.

A much greater freedom of criticism on public men was permitted in such a form than in popular drama. The bold assault upon a later Metellus, in particular, must remind us of Nævius's fate, which did not overtake Lucilius. The glimpse here accorded us at the centre of the world's traffic is anything but ideal, and indicates that the spirit of metropolitan business life has changed little.

> "But now from dawn to dark, on holiday
> Or workday, and the whole day too, the folk
> And senators bustle about the Forum,
> Quitting it never, to one task and art
> Devoted;—to deceive most skilfully,
> To fight with craft, to win by blandishments,
> To make a stratagem of kindliness,
> As if they all were foes of every one."

The satirist's own social philosophy is very thrifty, conservative, and simple.

> "Man's virtue is to know each thing's true worth,
> What's good or bad, useless, dishonest, base:
> To know the limits in our quest of gain,
> To pay the proper honor unto wealth,
> To grant to office that which is its due,
> To be the foe of evil men and deeds,
> To count one's country's welfare first of all,
> And next our parents'; after that our own."

What we miss most in this whole early Roman world is the voice of the joyous lyric poet, soldier, boon com-

panion, lover, dreamer, singing for the pure delight in life and song. No Archilochos, no Sappho, no Anacreon do we hear, or hear of. Perhaps the rather stolid and Philistine view of all human life and effort just cited may hint the reason.

Lost Historians.

After Cato's broader and more philosophic study, history among the Romans seems to have fallen back into the earlier form of prosaic annals, as dry and unartistic as our old Saxon Chronicle. Most to be regretted is Fannius Strabo, son-in-law of Lælius, and for a time active partisan of the Gracchi, because his work included a full account of his own troublous times. Cœlius Antipater, author of a monograph on the second Punic war, by fondness for dreams, oracles, and marvels generally, for the livelier dialogue form, poetic phrasing, etc., perhaps shares Herodotos's influence, and in turn affected Livy. Of brief autobiographical sketches, doubtless really political pamphlets, by Gaius Gracchus and others, we have but most meagre vestiges.

Lost Orators.

Perhaps most of all do we lament the loss of the Roman orators. A very large number of speeches had been preserved, we know not how faithfully, beginning with the plea of Appius Claudius against peace with Pyrrhus. It would surely surprise even Cicero, who, in his dialogue "Brutus," has left us the best historical sketch of civic eloquence in Rome, to know that we can no longer illustrate it by a single complete authentic speech of any Roman save Cicero himself.

Gaius Gracchus, † 121 B.C.

The scanty fragments perhaps justify Cicero's judgment, that the greatest of all was the younger of the two martyred Gracchi, the generous champions of the landless folk. The position of this fearless hero of a hopeless cause was most striking. His early doom was clearly before his eyes. "He related to many

that, when he hesitated to seek his first public office, his brother Tiberius in a dream, said to him, 'he might resist as he would; yet he would die even as he himself had perished.'" The same fatalism is heard in his burning words: "Whither shall I turn in my misery? To the Capitol? It drips with my brother's blood. To my home? To see my wretched mother lamenting and bowed to earth?" A poet's picturesque simplicity wings a patriot's scorn, when he cries: "O Quirites, now that I have come to Rome, the money-belts which I carried forth full, I have brought back from my province empty: the great jars that others carried out filled with wine, they fetched home again overflowing with money."

Cicero de Divinatione, i., 26, 56.

But even this masterful voice reaches us only in a few such ringing words. We turn from dim twilight of surmise into sudden and blazing day: to the best-known age and life, possibly, in all human annals.

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For a fuller treatment of most subjects in this chapter we can best refer the English reader to Sellar, and to the translation of Mommsen. There is an extraordinarily clear and graphic "Rückblick" in Schanz, pp. 123–25. The noble character of the Gracchi, particularly of Gaius, should be studied not only in the general histories, but in the more sympathetic pages of Plutarch. Their failure was doubtless inevitable, but they saw aright the fatal danger. For Lucilius all special students should refer to the exhaustive edition of the fragments by Lucian Müller.

CHRONOLOGICAL TABLES.

509–100 B.C.

Political Events.		*Literary Events.*	
B.C.		B.C.	
509	Consuls first elected.	509	Treaty between Rome and Carthage (Polyb., iii., 22).
		493	Treaty with the Latins (Dionys., vi., 95; Livy, ii., 33).
488	Coriolanus retreats from before Rome.		
454	Three men sent to Greece to collect laws (Livy, iii., 41).		
451–450	The Decemvirs in power.	451–450	Laws of the Twelve Tables promulgated.
396	Camillus conquers Veii.		
390	Rome sacked and burned by the Gauls.		
		364	Etrurian actors appear at the *Ludi Romani*.
339–338	Latin cities conquered.		
321	Defeat of Romans by Samnites at Caudine Forks.		
312	Appius Claudius, as censor, begins Appian Way and Claudian aqueduct.		
290	End of Samnite wars.		
280–272	War with Tarentum and King Pyrrhus.	280	Speech of Appius Claudius against peace with Pyrrhus.
		272	Livius Andronicus brought to Rome a slave, from Tarentum.
266	Italy completely under Roman rule.		
264–241	First Punic War, chiefly about Sicily.		
241	Sicily a Roman province.		

Political Events.		*Literary Events.*	
B.C.		B.C.	
		240	Tragedy and comedy presented by Andronicus (Livy, vii., 2).
218–202	Second Punic War. Hannibal in Italy.		
217	Trasimenus.		
216	Cannæ.		
207	Hasdrubal's army destroyed.	207	Andronicus's hymn of intercession sung in public. Authors' guild founded. Cn. Nævius, author of Epic on Punic War, tragedies, comedies, etc. (†204). Quintus Fabius Pictor, earliest Roman historian, wrote in Greek (circa 225 B.C.).
204	Scipio invades Africa.	204	Cato brings Ennius to Rome. Ennius, epic poet, dramatist, etc. (†169). Plautus, comedy-writer (†184). Cæcilius, comedy-writer (†circa 168). Cato, historian, orator (†149). Pacuvius, tragic author (†circa 130 B.C.). Terence, author of comedies (185–159 B.C.).
190	Crushing defeat of Antiochus of Syria.		
183	Death of Africanus, Hannibal, and Philopoimen.		
168	Conquest of Macedonia.		
167	Thousand Greek hostages, including Polybios, taken to Rome.		
		166–160	Terence's comedies exhibited. Lucilius, Satirist (180–103 B.C.).
149–146	Third Punic War.		

Political Events.		*Literary Events.*	
B.C.		B.C.	
146	Destruction of Carthage and Corinth. Africa, Macedonia, Greece, Roman provinces.		
		145	Theatre, with wooden seats, erected by Mummius.
133	Younger Africanus destroys Numantia in Spain. Tribunate and murder of Tiberius Gracchus.		
124	Gaius Gracchus returns from Sardinia, and is elected tribune.		
121	Death of Gaius Gracchus.		
112–106	War with Jugurtha.		Attius (or Accius), author of tragedies (170–90 B.C.).
		106	Birth of Cicero.
105	Gladiatorial contests made a state festival.		
102–101	Marius destroys the Teutons and Cimbri.		

BOOK II

THE CICERONIAN AGE

(100–43 B.C.)

CHAPTER VIII

THE TIME AND THE MAN

WHEN the younger Africanus, returning from his great campaign in Spain, heard that his noble kinsman, Tiberius Gracchus, had perished in the attempt to wrest the public lands from the oligarchy and the "rings," to restore the sturdy type of free farmer in Latium and Italy generally,—he showed his Hellenic culture, and the short-sighted views of his caste, by quoting the verse uttered, in the Homeric Olympos, on the death of the dastard Aigisthos:

Fall of Numantia, 133 B.C.

Odyssey, i., vs. 47.

"So may another perish, whoever does such deeds."

A quarter-century more, and the decay of national character appeared all but fatal. Jugurtha's exclamation "A city for sale" seemed prophetic. He himself for years, and Mithridates, in the next generation, for decades, bribed, cajoled, or terrified Roman commanders and armies. The Roman dominion seemed ready to drop to pieces like the Macedonian empire.

Sallust, Jugurtha, § 35 ad fin.

But perhaps the elder cultured races were too broken in spirit to reassert themselves. The resistless movement of our barbarian ancestors from the North into Mediterranean lands was not to begin in earnest for ages. Above all, even in that century of constant civic turmoil, Rome produced a series of commanders so great, that even her selfish and murderous factions still ruled the provinces with merciless strength, and finally handed on to Augustus far more lands and revenues than the Scipionic age had

dreamed of winning. Marius crushed Jugurtha, and cut to pieces the mighty vanguard of invading Teutons and Celts. Pompey completed Sulla's Eastern conquests, destroyed Mithridates, added many provinces in the Orient. Cæsar Romanized the chief Keltic lands, and made the legionary eagles known and dreaded on the Thames, on the Rhine, even for a day's march into the forests of unconquerable Germany.

Why the age of Cicero?

The same marvellous age produced the two Roman poets who show, in diverse fields, creative genius of the highest order, and also the greatest master of prose style,—if he may be judged by his influence on after-times,—that ever lived. The forensic eloquence, in particular, of five modern languages, including our own, in words, phrases, and spirit, is full of Tullian echoes. Castelar, Cavour, Gambetta, Gladstone, Everett, are alike fully conscious of Ciceronian influence. Julius Cæsar, in the world of action perhaps the mightiest strategist and organizer that ever lived, was not even a close second in the field of literature. In this volume, then, the age of the giants, the age of turbulent transition from republic to empire, is clearly the epoch of Cicero.

His public life and character we can touch only so far as they aid to interpret his chief writings, particularly his orations. He certainly seems out of place in that age of violent force. Sharing with Pompey the old-fashioned purity and love of family ties, Cicero also felt, even for provincials, the humanity which Cæsar limited to Romans, though including in it his deadliest personal enemies. Cicero's extraordinary vanity and self-consciousness, though a source of weakness in all relations, was doubly fatal in political action. Yet he was a true patriot, eager to surpass his ideal prototype Demosthenes, and with a far more bewildering path of duty before him.

The well-to-do middle class from which Cicero sprang

was itself vanishing. He himself, like Pompey, was pushed upward by official honors into the senatorial and olgiarchical faction which called itself the republic. But the future belonged to the mob, to the masterly Julius who dominated it, to the cold-blooded young Octavian who gathered all essential powers into his own hands.

Cicero's life was always lonely. Like Dante he heartily admired no one, even in his own little faction, save himself: Brutus, he saw, was cruel and extortionate, Cato truly porcine in his impracticable stubbornness, Sulpicius a mere dreaming scholar, Lucullus an indolent epicure, etc., etc. Worse still, it was all essentially true. The old forms broke down because there was no one competent to work them. Cæsar's dictatorship was a necessity, his murder a crime. Twenty months of chaos, terrible bloodshed, and a harsher despotism, were the chief results. If this, the prevailing view, be a true one, Cicero's public career was a foreordained tragedy, his death a costly but necessary assurance of peace.

He was hampered in certain crises, too, by a form of cowardice which may have been purely physical. His hasty flight when threatened by Clodius, his lachrymose complainings in exile, are abundantly characterized in his own letters. He dared not let the Catilinarian leaders live overnight, he applauded and defended the murder of his personal enemy Clodius by Milo, an equally lawless bravo, he refused the leadership of the Pompeians, was the first to make abject submission to Cæsar, was not intrusted with the secrets of Brutus's conspirators, yet rejoiced effusively in the deed of the Ides. These are verdicts passed by the man himself, or those who knew him best, not to be reversed at this late day.

Perhaps the severest chance that has befallen him is the preservation of his confidential letters, exposing every hesitation, turning the flash-light of publicity on every petty

and selfish motive. Few indeed of the world's heroes could pass such scrutiny unscathed. Hardly one, of any age, is so mercilessly unveiled to our eyes. That it is mainly a self-revelation makes the matter no better. Possibly his greatest service of all is thus to exemplify to us the essential oneness, the extreme humanness, of all men.

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The bare outlines here suggested should be carefully filled up, or redrawn. The question of Cicero's character can never be absolutely determined. The present writer has set forth his beliefs most fully in the *Sewanee Review* for July, 1900.

The most adverse view is taken in Professor Mommsen's powerful volumes. Middleton's "Life of Cicero" is still valuable, Forsyth's is better, Boissier's "Cicéron et ses Amis" is yet more readable and up to date, but the serious student must sit down, in a library of classical authors, and work through Drumann's so-called "Geschichte Roms," Vols. V. and VI., with their exhaustive references.

The best library edition of Cicero's complete works, in Latin, without notes, is Baiter and Kayser's, Tauchnitz, in eleven volumes.


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GENERAL VIEW OF THE FORUM, WITH THE CAPITOL.

CHAPTER IX

CICERO AS AN ORATOR

Of the personal influences that led Cicero to legal and rhetorical studies he accords many pleasant glimpses, *e.g.* at the beginning of the "De Amicitia," and much more copiously in the "De Oratore," where Antonius and Crassus in particular are lovingly portrayed. It is true, however, that in Crassus Cicero is often describing himself. His youthful relations with the Greek poet Archias, and with the venerable Accius, are well known. Born, like his kinsman Marius, at Arpinum, he was carefully educated in the capital.

Cf. supra, p.23.

His first public appearance seemed courageous. It was toward the close of the reign of terror under Sulla. A rich Umbrian named Roscius had been murdered in Rome. The probable culprits, two of his kinsmen, then agreed with Chrysogonus, an all-powerful freedman and favorite of the dictator, to put the victim's name on the list of the proscribed, and divide his confiscated wealth. When Roscius's young son resisted this second outrage, he was himself accused of parricide.

80 B.C.

No other lawyer ventured to defend the innocent youth, says Cicero, who explains his own daring by his obscurity, but seems to have had for some reason powerful protection in Sulla's own circle. Though successful, he yet spent the next years, while Sulla lived, travelling in Greece, "for his health," as he himself truthfully explained. The great teacher, Molon of Rhodes, removed at this time from Cicero's style "a certain Asiatic floridness and overful-

ness" which we should never have missed. This speech, *Pro Roscio Amerino*, like many of the others, betrays later revision. No youth could have said to Sulla's face: "*Not merely the habit of mercy, but even of inquiry, has vanished from the commonwealth in these days.*"

75-74 B.C. As quæstor in Sicily Cicero became the favorite, and future champion, of the oppressed provincials. His rediscovery of Archimedes's tomb must give a thrill of envy to any true archæologist. His humanity was genuine, as his hatred of gladiatorial sports indicates.

Tusc. Disp., v., 23, 64.

The impeachment of the rapacious Verres was creditable but not extremely dangerous. Since Sulla's death the old forms had been restored to decent activity.

70 B.C. The case was a notorious scandal. Cicero collected an overwhelming mass of evidence in Sicily. After the preliminary hearing the great Hortensius gave up the case, while Verres hastened into exile. The five long "books" of the "second action" were never delivered, but as published they throw a flood of light on provincial conditions. This case at once made Cicero the leader of the bar, but did not cost him Hortensius's personal good-will. A lawyer received no fee, save generous presents and legacies, but the way to civic office was now open.

This was the year of Pompey's first consulship. The two acted together in restoring the popular tribunes, readmitting the equites to sit with senators on such cases as Verres's, in general in strengthening the middle class, which Sulla had crushed. This personal alliance lasted some years, and its chief monument is the extravagant

66 B.C. eulogy called *Pro lege Manilia*, which won for Pompey the supreme command against Mithridates. There was little genuine affection on either side. On the other hand, a real congeniality, a mutual

charm, always bound together Cæsar and Cicero, whose political plans never ran parallel.

The year of Cicero's consulate carried him quite over into the aristocratic party. In January he was still "not a consul who, like most, think it a sin to praise the Gracchi." In November, in the harangues against Catiline, he cited the heroic brothers repeatedly among the notorious traitors, justly slain, of earlier days. The hatred and fear of Catiline, with whom the democratic leaders, even Cæsar, appear to have been somewhat implicated, the personal advances of the old nobles, the excessive confidence in his own position as *pater patriæ*, may all have aided this change.

63 B.C. De Lege Agraria, ii., 5.

The four speeches "against Catiline" are vivid and sufficiently authentic memorials of this proud epoch in the orator's career, but have been elaborated and polished in later years. The extravagant and abusive marshalling of Catiline's host is the least pleasing. The third speech is the happiest, and of it the three first and last sentences should be perfectly familiar to every student. The clear, copious style, the resonant periodic structure, even the frank self-consciousness, are perfectly characteristic of all Ciceronian expression. There is a rhythm, also, which all can hear and recognize, even a verse-effect in

In Cat., ii., passim. Cf. supra, p. 53.

Fortunatissimam pulcherrimamque urbem,
Deorum immortalium summo erga vos amore,
Laboribus consiliis periculisque meis.

There is nothing better in its kind. No imitator has surpassed or can surpass the master. Self-conscious, elaborated rhetoric it still remains. But eloquence has higher possibilities. In Demosthenes, Burke, Webster, we have passages where art either effaces itself, or is really lost in the volcanic utterance of the heart. Lincoln's

Gettysburg speech, jotted hastily, it is said, upon an odd scrap of paper and thrown away after delivery, is luckily preserved to us by a stenographer's notes. Lincoln was quite unaware that he had created an eternal masterpiece. Cicero, too, may well have risen to such outbursts: but if so, he has himself refined and polished them out of sight in the revision.

The most dexterous and witty plea of the eventful year came late in November. Murena, a rough, fearless soldier, had been elected consul for 62. Bribery of the rabble voters seems to have been even more general and shameless than usual. The noble and scholarly jurist Sulpicius, a defeated candidate for whom Cicero himself had labored, brought suit to invalidate the election. But Catiline was in arms in Etruria. The times demanded a man of action. A new election might even mean a radical success, or a fatal interregnum.

So Cicero accepted a brief for Murena, and won. He apparently, even, saved his personal friendship with Sulpicius, whom he lived to eulogize splendidly after death, in the ninth Philippic. Even young Cato, on whom Cicero also showered ridicule because he appeared as Sulpicius's advocate, only remarked with the harsh smile of his great-grandsire: "What a buffoon our consul is!" There is indeed much effective jesting on the forms of legal procedure, and on the affectations of philosophers. But Sulpicius was the greatest jurist, Cato the most heroic, consistent Stoic of their day: and no man appreciated them more adequately than Cicero.

The "Pro Archia Poeta" is a deserving favorite. The political, even the legal element, is small, and has probably been abridged by the author. The prevailing tone is sincere and tender. While nominally pleading the cause of his old teacher, whose Roman citizenship had been questioned, Cicero expresses

62 B.C.

his gratitude to Greek artists in general, and that delight in letters which is the "common link" among scholars of every age and land. It is by such utterances that Cicero has won the lasting affection, if not the unqualified admiration, of all who love literature and share in philosophic thought. Yet the orator really cared little for Archias, who was, in fact, a rather clever Greek rhetorician.

Cicero was undoubtedly invited to join the little political cabal or ring misnamed the first triumvirate. His hesitation, whether due to vanity or patriotism, finally led Cæsar to push Clodius forward. The bill first offered by Clodius did not name Cicero, but outlawed those who had put citizens to death without trial. Yet the application to the Catilinarian executions was understood by all. The banishment of Cicero, brief as it was, clipped his wings permanently. He could never again become dangerous as a heroic leader. After one or two attempts to reassert himself he relapsed into rather sullen submission, later even defending personal enemies at the suggestion of Cæsar or Pompey.

60 B.C.

58–57 B.C.

Such justification as could be made for this policy is to be sought not, naturally, in any speech, but in the long letter to Lentulus, which was evidently meant for publication as an *Apologia*. At best it is no heroic tale. He has but followed Pompey: Cæsar's kindness is irresistible: the aristocratic leaders have been most ungrateful and impracticable: self-preservation is the law of life. Until after Cæsar's death, the voice of Cicero the statesman is silenced. Yet there are meantime several speeches of his too important to pass over.

54 B.C. Epist. ad Fam., i., 9.

In his defence of Cælius Rufus, who had been a lover of the notorious Clodia, probably supplanting the poet Catullus, the lady is assailed in a fashion that no modern

court-room would tolerate. From the charges of having defrauded Clodia, and of having tried to poison her, Cœlius was acquitted; but we get a lurid glimpse at the social conditions. Catiline, long an intimate of Cœlius, has to be generously whitewashed: and here Cicero confesses to some inconsistency with the fierce diatribes of 63 B.C.

56 B.C.

Cf. infra, p. 116.

The speech for Milo was never delivered. Rome was in a state of anarchy, Cæsar being in Gaul, and Pompey at home, slowly squandering the fame of his early victories by his supine incompetence. The uproar even at the trial frightened Cicero, so that he broke down utterly. Milo in exile warmly praised the written speech, and rejoiced at the failure: "Else I should not be enjoying the mullets of Marseilles."

52 B.C.

Still less pleasing to Cicero's admirers is the group of clever pleas uttered to the dictator Cæsar by the most illustrious, stately, obsequious, of his courtiers. For him who would stand at a monarch's footstool to crave his clemency, the *Pro Marcello*, *Pro Ligario*, etc., are models of grace and skill.

48–44 B.C.

Most heroic of all epochs in this varied life are the twenty months between Cæsar's murder and that of Cicero himself. The contrast with Antony's craft, cruelty, licentiousness, and lawlessness, made the cause of the nobles seem well worth fighting for. The fury of the strife soon left no hope of any choice save victory or death. Cicero is at bay.

The second and greatest of the "Philippics," or diatribes against Antony, was never delivered. The whole series is the chief source of knowledge for that important period. One is glad indeed to hear an absolutely frank and fearless voice in these latter days, even though it shares the general savagery and fury of civil strife. Cicero, of course, never gave to these harangues a calm, painful

revision, and no later hand appears to have meddled with them.

The political judgment of the patriotic leaders can hardly be admired. That Octavian, intrusted with high command, would turn against the slayers of his adoptive father, might surely have been surmised. To Cicero's death he seems to have consented reluctantly. Yet, even without the furious insistence of Antony, Julius's fate might have taught the cold-hearted, long-sighted youth the necessity for heroic surgery. Like nearly every Roman, Cicero died bravely, with a touch of tenderness and care for his servants, at the very last, which we may fairly call Christian. It was fortunate that he did not linger belated, on the changing scene, to become again the chief courtier of a Cæsar.

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For all Cicero's orations there is a creditable edition, with English notes, by George Long, in four volumes of the stately "Bibliotheca Classica." The "Philippics," or speeches against Antony, are still better elucidated by King in the Clarendon Press Series. School editions of the Catilinarians, Archias, Manilian, and a few others, are numberless. A mature student should take in hand rather Heitland's "Pro Murena," or even the repellent "Pro Cluentio"—a terrible family poisoning case, reminding us of Borgian times in Italy—edited by Ramsay.

English readers will find the Bohn Cicero fairly good, though not comparable with Kennedy's masterly Demosthenes. Cicero is easy to understand, very hard for us to appreciate as a stylist or to translate aright. Though most of his words have come over into English, they meet there Saxon synonyms, and so are apt to sound turgid, needlessly polysyllabic, and also colorless when their composition is no longer self-evident. Whatever the reason, he has not been well translated.

CHAPTER X

THE CICERONIAN CORRESPONDENCE

THE letters, like the orations, cover most of Cicero's career, and are a precious source for the history of the times. Much less than the orations, however, as is natural, are they in literary form. Especially is this true of the most valuable, the confidential epistles to Atticus, never meant for alien eyes. On the other hand, some of the letters to other friends, like that to Lentulus already mentioned, are political or personal pamphlets, very likely manifolded and circulated more or less widely at the time, as a statesman now gives a personal letter to the reporters. Even a genuine brotherly letter to Quintus Cicero may contain advice and warnings to a provincial governor almost as instructive to us as the arraigning of Verres.

Ad Fam., I., 9.

Supra, p. 77.

Ad Quintum Fratrem, I., 1.

Furthermore these eight hundred letters are by no means all written by Cicero. For example, in the collection "ad Familiares," the entire eighth book consists of Cælius's cynical, gossipy budgets of news from Rome to a homesick friend in far Cilicia. Cælius's lawless wit, or the heavier dignity of Sulpicius, varies distinctly from Cicero's own style, which again, when he whispers to Atticus, is elliptical, allusive, interlarded with Greek, sometimes half inarticulate for fear of his own carrier's treachery: but stately, periodic, in full dress, while he justifies himself painfully to Lentulus and to us.

It is needless to argue in detail the many-sided value and interest of this great collection, which sets forth the

private life of Roman gentlemen as no other documents could do. Sometimes the briefest enclosure seems most happily chosen to throw a clear light on character. Thus Cicero returning from Cilicia, full of pride over some skirmishes with mountain tribes, hopeful even of a triumph, finds the Roman world convulsed, on the edge of civil war, and hesitates long between Pompey and Cæsar.

The former's summons is as gruff as a corporal's to a raw recruit: "I decide you should join us at Luceria; for I think you will be safest there." No word more, save the curtest facts as to movements of troops. Cæsar, amid the same turmoil, sends at least three letters, each a little masterpiece, displaying that gracious tact and keen perception of character by which he swayed all who came within his reach. He begs that he may see Cicero, "to avail myself of your judgment, your influence, your position and your assistance, in all that concerns me." . . . "To find my conduct approved by you is a triumph of gratification." "What more suitable part is there for a peace-loving man, and a good citizen, than to hold aloof from civil dissensions?" This is his final plea, as Cicero's veering sail fills on the other tack at last.

Ad Att. viii., 11 A.

Ad Atticum, ix., 6, A.

Ad Atticum, ix., 6, Ibid. x., 8, B.

Another charm in these letters is the tone of kindly amenity, of good-fellowship, of tenderness even, among those of whom we else might think as in constant strife, so troublous is the age as a whole. Most admired, perhaps, of the letters is one written by Sulpicius, from Athens, on the death of Tullia, Cicero's only daughter and chief comfort. Another epistle of nearly the same date by the same hand, giving a graphic account of Marcellus's death, is curiously different in style, though both are models. Indeed, the

Ad Fam., iv., 5. 45 B.C.

number of Romans who wrote with perfect ease, clearness, and simplicity was evidently great. But Cicero himself is, of course, supreme, and has in fact exercised ever since his day a dominant influence over letter-writing, cultivated as a fine art, with an eye on posterity.

Ad Fam., iv., 12.

Among Cicero's correspondents three men are most constantly mentioned, who may perhaps best be briefly discussed here. Brutus plays so large a part in the tragic scene of the Ides, and in the Shakespearean play, that his name at least is to all men familiar. The question whether he was actually Cæsar's son is a curious chapter of the *chronique scandaleuse*, which we can hardly unseal even if we would. His importance as an orator has been touched upon elsewhere. His character is still under debate. One side of it is indefensible, for Cicero refers in great indignation and evident sincerity to his friend's rapacity, cruelty, and lawlessness in his relations with provincials.

M. Junius Brutus, 85-42 B.C.

Epist. ad Att., v., 21; vi., 3.

Atticus might be reckoned among the historians, as his chief work was a chronological table of events for fully seven centuries, from the founding of Rome to about 50 B.C. The magistrates' names were entered in a form to aid the tracing of kinship. In general Atticus was an enthusiast in genealogy, and wrote special treatises on the "trees" of various leading families. As an antiquarian he was quite overshadowed by Varro, and his largest usefulness was perhaps as a publisher. That is, he employed a large force of slaves in copying manuscripts for sale. To him might be attributed in part the preservation of Cicero's work. Even the disappearance of his own letters might be explained by the caution of a man who managed to maintain cordial friendship alike

T. Pomponius Atticus, 109-32 B.C.

Nepos, Life of Atticus.

with Pompey and Cæsar, Brutus and Mark Antony, and who spent his old age under the rule of Cicero's murderers. But Atticus's harmless antiquarian works have all vanished too.

Quintus Cicero, a harsh and headstrong man, is distinctly a minor figure in literature. His one extant book, or pamphlet, offers advice to his elder brother on the art of candidacy for office. Quintus was unhappily married to Atticus's sister, and some of the most human pages of the correspondence touch upon their domestic quarrels. Quintus, and his only son, shared Marcus's fate in 43 B.C.

Q. Tullius Cicero, 102–43 B.C. De Petitione Consulatus.

Many striking figures appear less frequently in the letters. Some of them arouse a strong desire for a fuller acquaintance. Perhaps the finest antithesis to the witty, dissolute, and unprincipled Cælius is a certain Matius, a life-long friend of Cicero, who in May, 44, writes a single letter of proud self-defence. He had loved Cæsar; the man, not the politician; he will not be restrained from frank expression of his grief. He hopes to spend his last days peacefully in Rhodes: but "No peril has such terrors as to deter me from gratitude or humanity." He had openly disapproved Cæsar's invasion of the fatherland. He will now fearlessly deplore his murder.

Ad Famil., xi., 28.

The young Cato is much oftener mentioned, and writes one rather able letter, but hardly appears at all in Roman literature as an author. Plutarch knew one speech of his, that against Catiline's accomplices: yet this may have been Sallust's elaborate composition. Cato was the great-grandson of the famous censor, and a certain wilful self-assertion and crudeness of temper seemed an heirloom in the house. As Cæsar complained, he was excessively fortunate in his spectacular death. Hard pressed by the dictator's troops, he shut himself up in

Ad Famil., xv., 5.

Utica, and when the town was doomed to fall, after reading Plato all night, calmly stabbed himself. Cæsar craved the luxury of pardoning such a man.

Sulpicius Rufus, already referred to, was the chief jurist and codifier of law in his generation, the true successor to that Mucius Scævola under whom Cicero began his legal studies. The best lawyers of the next generation were in this period accounted Sulpicius's pupils. In contrast with his one hundred and eighty learned books, chiefly legal, his three orations praised by Quintilian were forgotten.

Quintilian, 10, 7, 30.

This list, which might be greatly extended, is offered merely to illustrate the vivid though insufficient light thrown on many lives, and on the general life of the age, by these priceless letters.

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The letters have received extraordinary attention of late years. There were four different collections, Cicero to and from his family and various friends sixteen books, to Quintus Cicero three, to Atticus sixteen, and a series to and from Brutus. The arrangement is not chronological. Many dates are lacking, and not all can be supplied from the contents.

A complete edition with notes is edited by Professor R. Y. Tyrrell, and Professor Shuckburgh has also undertaken a translation of the entire series. Another highly useful pair of books is the annotated edition of 148 selected letters, illustrating the political career of Cicero, by Watson, and a very spirited translation of the same epistles by Jeans. In this particular field the young English student is better served than the German.

The teacher should supplement this chapter by readings from Jeans or Shuckburgh. On Atticus's life, Nepos is our chief authority, on Cato and Brutus Plutarch should be read.

CHAPTER XI

THE RHETORICAL WORKS

Of all the essays on rhetoric and oratory found among Cicero's works, indeed of all the Latin books on this subject, the most practical, well-proportioned, and directly useful is a volume demonstrably not his, dedicated to a certain Herennius. It was composed by a partisan of Marius, shortly after the great leader's death. Quintilian, quoting from it repeatedly, names as the author Cornificius. He seems to have been a man of bold public character, frank, vigorous speech, and earnest convictions. The technical nomenclature was, he claims, largely created by him, and was adopted in all later manuals. His examples are chosen largely from recent speeches, and reveal his own warm partisanship. Especially fine is the indignant yet picturesque account, quoted from an unknown source, of Tiberius Gracchus's murder.

Marius, †86 B.C.

Ad Herennium, iv., 55.

This essay, though a technical manual based on Greek originals, is really a creditable piece of literary work. At the close the grave Roman sense of proportion, the consciousness of rank, of a career, of large duties, reduces the whole treatise to its proper sphere: "We have other and better aims, which we pursue in life far more strenuously, so that even if, in oratory, we attain not what we would, yet only a minor part of a most complete life will be lacking." This alone suffices to show that it is not Cicero who speaks.

Cicero's own youthful essay in two books, known as the

"De Inventione," discussing the materials of the rhetorician's art only, is confessedly incomplete. It is a very immature performance, and often copies verbatim from the master-work just described, which had then recently appeared.

The "De Oratore," on the other hand, is the most sustained and elaborate attempt ever made by Cicero to imitate the Platonic dialogue-form. Dramatic, indeed, he could never be, for self-effacement is with him impossible. Though embittered somewhat by his exile, and cut off from real activity in politics, Cicero had not then met the worst humiliations of his life. He was at the full maturity of his powers. He is writing with care, at his leisure, on his chief subject of life-long interest. The scene is set in September of the year 91 B.C., at a villa in the beautiful region about Tusculum. Antonius, Crassus, and the other masters of eloquence who appear in the dialogue, were really known personally to the precocious boy Cicero, down to the tragic death of most of them in the reign of terror under Marius and Cinna. The high ideal of oratory, as a civic need, reminds one of Cato's definition, that the orator is "a good man speaking." If all the characters talk much alike, it is partly because all Romans thought alike on such themes.

De Oratore, published 55 B.C.

The elaborate setting of the dialogue gives a pleasant picture of elegant life in the suburban villas. Though Cicero was rash to challenge comparison with the famous discussion between Phaidros and Socrates under the plane-tree on the river-bank, he at least quite holds his own with Xenophon's rustic scene and dialogue in the "Oiconomicos." As a whole the work is diffuse, because constant effort is made to break and lighten the technical passages by incidental illustration or by-play: yet the whole ground of rhetoric is fairly covered.

De Oratore, i., 7, 28.

In a passage clearly marked as a digression, the subject of humor and wit is intrusted as it were to a specialist, Cæsar Strabo. The examples quoted are largely savage retorts of lawyers or politicians. Thus, to cite the first case, Catulus, whose name means puppy, had raised his voice in debate. When his opponent said: "Why do you bark?" the answer came back: "Because I see a thief!" So a stubborn man, a fourth son, is told, "If your mother should bear a fifth, it would be an ass." But Roman wit in general is both heavy and sardonic.

De Orat., II., 54, 216 ff.

The reader's interest flags somewhat before the three days' conversation ends: unless he is making a thorough study of the most copious, lucid, graceful, Latin style ever attained. In this, as in all his larger essays, Cicero creates a goodly number of technical Latin words to match familiar Greek terms.

The whole work is dedicated to the author's younger brother Quintus, who had held that oratory, like poetry, is a matter of innate power. Marcus regards it rather as a final consummate result of all liberal study and training. The early "De Inventione" is mentioned, only to be dismissed as boyish, incomplete, and unworthy. Altogether, this is the most important of all Cicero's essays.

De Orat., I., 2, 5.

In the "Brutus," under the form of a dialogue between Pomponius Atticus, Cicero himself, and the young tyrannicide, we have an excellent brief sketch of the rise and progress of Roman oratory. The living masters of eloquence are as a rule passed over, yet three or four are discussed, while the chief speaker coyly yields to his friends' persistence, and reviews his own laborious attainment of perfection. Some curious details even of his youthful figure, mannerisms, etc., are included. This essay is quite indispensable, as an historic sketch, but

Brutus, published 46 B.C.

there is an utter and deplorable lack of material to illustrate it. Even such imperial figures as the elder Cato and Gaius Gracchus are now dim and all but silent shades.

The "Orator," a sort of ideal delineation, has again many vivid personal touches. Toward its close is a special treatment of rhythm, each form of metrical foot being frankly assigned to a special emotional purpose. This essay, also, is dedicated in its sub-title *ad Marcum Brutum*. Cicero was well aware that many were coming to prefer Brutus's curt, sinewy, unadorned style to his own. Indeed it is probable that Cicero would now seem quite too florid, Brutus far the more masterful.

Orator, published 46 B.C. 58, 196 ff.

The minor rhetorical studies have little value or weight as literature. One is in fact a sort of elementary catechism arranged as a text-book of questions and answers for the young Marcus. On the other hand, there still remains to be mentioned the mass of writings, through which this remarkable man most vitally influenced the thought of the Middle Ages.

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The subject does not exactly belong to general literature, but rather to science. Cicero, however, was pre-eminently fitted for a popular treatment of the art in which he made unflagging studies and efforts, and in which he has probably never been surpassed. The translation of his two chief essays, by Watson, in the Bohn Library, seems adequate as a rule. There is a convenient American edition of the "Brutus" with English notes by Kellogg, and an exhaustive British one of the "De Oratore," in three volumes, by Wilkins. In the introduction to the latter is a very thorough analysis of the "Ad Herennium," which is regarded as the best type of what we may call the school rhetoric of the Romans.

CHAPTER XII

THE PHILOSOPHICAL ESSAYS, AND OTHER WORKS.

LUCK, Fate, or Providence, has been astonishingly generous to Cicero's fame as a writer. His orations, his correspondence, his essays in all fields, have usually survived, alone or with hardly a rival. Even as a philosopher he was for many centuries assigned a leading position, and many of his hasty translations or free recastings of Greek work are still indispensable to us.

Yet this is almost wholly a mischance. It is due to the all but total loss of the Stoic, Epicurean, and Academic writings in their original form. Of course Cicero does not share the silliness, the bewilderment, the boundless inaccuracy, of Diogenes Laertius, the Greek "biographer" of the philosophers. He is tolerably accurate as a rule, always rational, and his style is at least never obscure or difficult.

Cicero was hardly a real philosopher, but a serious, thoughtful, and scholarly man, interested in the attempts of others to solve the chief moral and theological problems. His work in this field was taken up late in life, as a consolation and diversion in bereavement, in political disappointment, in enforced exile from a public career. It was done, as a rule, in feverish haste. Cicero's own allegiance was to the "New Academy." With him, however, this means little more than an open-minded eclecticism, a willingness to supply fluent restatements in Latin forms for all the schools, while remaining distinctly sceptical as to the attainment of absolute truth.

We feel that the practical, utilitarian, gravely Roman spirit pervades and modifies every page. He is by no means a satisfactory interpreter of his Greek masters. But their voices are silent.

Even the Latin terminology, largely invented by Cicero, has passed into the languages of all Western Europe, and has not yet given place to the Greek terms. In one great respect Cicero was a true Socratic: he sought helpful moral truths which could be applied to daily life.

Cicero's first known venture in this field was in some respects the boldest, for he undertook to rival Plato's masterpiece with a Latin dialogue, in six books, on the State. The scene was laid in 129 B.C., in the gardens of Scipio Æmilianus. We have copious fragments only, chiefly recovered in the nineteenth century from a palimpsest. The conversation traversed familiar lines, discussing the three forms, kingdom, aristocracy, democracy, and the distortion of each in tyranny, oligarchy, ochlocracy, as in Aristotle's "Politics." A fusion of the three nobler forms seems preferable. Instead of Plato's little ideal state is substituted the actual and mighty commonwealth of Rome itself, of which an historical sketch is given by Scipio, in Book II.

De Re Publica, published 51 B.C.

As Plato ended his volume with a picture of the rewards appointed for the righteous in the next world, so Cicero closes with a dream of Scipio on the same theme. This final passage is preserved entire. The mystical elements of Plato's vision are nearly all stript off. For instance, of reincarnation there is no hint. We are merely uplifted for the moment to the Milky Way, to be assured that a glorious and abiding home is there prepared for the souls of the good, especially of those "who have preserved, aided, strengthened their native land;" words which Cicero could hardly have written without self-consciousness. The practical realistic Roman temper is here unmistakable: yet

the dream, the dialogue as a whole, is on nearly every page indebted to Plato and his successors. Both these truths are indeed fairly faced in the first sentence of Macrobius's prolix commentary on the Dream: "Between Plato's book and Cicero's . . . this difference is seen at first glance: . . . the one has discussed what ought to be, the other what was established by the forefathers: yet . . . the imitation has preserved the likeness."

The title of the "Laws" is also taken from Plato. The dialogue is carried on by the two Ciceros and Atticus. We have only three books, but there were at least five. The patriotic pride of the Romans is here still more prominent. The sacral laws given in Book II. differ little from those in actual use, and credited to Numa. This is indeed remarked by Atticus, and warmly defended by Marcus Cicero. So, too, the civic government outlined in Book III. is essentially the old Roman constitution. Yet the debt to Plato, and other Greeks, is cordially acknowledged.

De Legibus, 51 B.C.

Book II., 10, 23.

E. g., Book III. ad init.

The unwelcome proconsulate in Cilicia, and the war between Cæsar and Pompey, made a break of half a decade in Cicero's career as a writer. But the last three years of his life show amazing activity in every field. We can do little more than catalogue his chief essays. Nearly all are in the form of dialogues, but the dramatic illusion is as a rule feebly maintained.

Cicero in Cilicia, 51-50 B.C.

Civil War, 49-47 B.C.

The most important work of this period, and one of the least satisfying, is the "De Finibus Bonorum et Malorum." In the five books are included three conversations, in different years, lands, and circumstances. The general subject is the highest or ideal Good. This is discussed from the Epicu-

De Finibus, published 45 B.C.

rean, Stoic, Peripatetic, and Academic points of view. There is much repetition. The Greek sources are not given, of course, and we get the impression that much is mere hasty translation from hand-books compiled by late and lesser members of the famous Attic schools. While Cicero dislikes, and probably states inadequately, the Epicurean doctrines, he feels, with his age, that the other schools differ rather in names and definitions than in essentials.

Much better finished in form, and more popular in every sense, are the "Tusculan Disputations." In each of the five books a thesis is stated and defended by a nameless young friend, then triumphantly refuted by Cicero himself. These theses are: 45-44 B.C.

(1.) Death is an evil.
(2.) Pain is the greatest of evils.
(3.) Misery befalls the wise man.
(4.) The wise man cannot be secure from agony of mind.
(5.) Character does not suffice to happiness.

The copious illustrations, and the extremely frequent poetic citations, are drawn quite impartially from Greece and Rome. The original share of Cicero seems larger than usual. It is in fact almost a continuous lecture in his own proper voice. This work has always been widely accepted as one of the most helpful productions of "pagan" ethics. It is certainly Cicero's own best contribution to the art of living happily.

The "De Deorum Natura" discusses the beliefs of the various schools as to the character and activity of the divine beings. From the eloquent silence of the letters on such matters, we surmise that Cicero, and his friends generally, were really Agnostics. More instructive in detail is the "De Divinatione," a supplementary treatise in two books. Here Quintus Cicero sets forth the Stoic doctrine of augury, through astrology, 45-44 B.C.

visions or dreams, marvellous incidents, flight of birds, entrails of victims, etc., etc. In the second book Marcus refutes the belief, and ridicules the whole science. This is the more instructive, because Cicero prided himself on his life-membership in the sacred state college of augurs.

44 B.C.

The "De Officiis" is a practical treatise on ethics, intended for the author's only son, young Marcus. Though quite lacking in system or unity, it has had much popularity and influence for good, through its sensible rules of behavior and patriotic illustrations. It is to be feared that all this was wasted on the last scion of the house, who was famous under Augustus only on account of his unrivalled capacity for wine. He was, however, the titular consul to whom was brought, in 31 B.C., the news that Antony had perished: a dramatic revenge.

44 B.C.

Merely naming the "Paradoxa Stoicorum," the "De Fato," the fragmentary "Timæus," which was but a translation from Plato, and the more important "Academica," we may speak more warmly of two little essays still widely read.

The "De Senectute," On Old Age, is an utterance of sincere feeling on a topic of universal interest. The character of Cato—here greatly softened—was one in which every Roman felt fitting pride. The fact remains, that most of the best thoughts are to be found, quite as well uttered, in such familiar places as the introduction to Plato's "Republic." The artistic, sensitive Greek was more sharply repelled from the ugliness and physical decay of old age than was the grave, dignified Roman. In Cicero we are reminded even, at times, of Browning's challenge:

4 B.C.

"Grow old along with me:
The best is yet to be,
The last of life, for which the first was made."

But Plato makes even his prosperous gray-beard concede: "A good man cannot be altogether cheerful under old age and poverty combined."

Plato, Republic, Book I., 330A.

The praise of agriculture comes less naturally from Cicero's pen. Here we may suppose the real Cato to be exerting his influence. Cicero apologizes for making him quote so freely from Greek authors, particularly Xenophon.

The "De Amicitia," like the companion essay, is dedicated to Atticus, who was certainly one of the most faithful of friends. That Cicero's essay is as satisfactory as Bacon's, or Emerson's, few will contend. Most readers feel a certain coldness in its tone, a rather frank though unconscious confession of selfishness. Yet many touches appeal to universal sympathy.

44 B.C.

Long as this list is, we would gladly recall at least one lost work, the "Consolatio," by which a broken-hearted father strove to lighten his own grief after Tullia's death in 45 B.C. Even here he avowedly follows a Greek essay on Grief, by Crantor. The bitter pessimism of this book is condemned by the Christian Lactantius. Cicero began with the assertion, reminding us of Plato's "Phaidros," that this life itself is a punishment for sin elsewhere.

In leaving this general subject of the philosophic works, Cicero's own words to Atticus may fairly be quoted: "These are transcripts. They are made with comparatively little toil. I supply only words, of which I have an abundance." In Latinizing and popularizing the main results of Greek thought he attained his aim. For a really large and contemplative view of ancient philosophy we may look, rather, as a recent authority suggests, to a calmer spirit, poised upon a remoter and securer outlook for retrospect: to Augustine. We should not fail to add, that the saintly bishop himself was first attracted to

A Att., xii., 52.

Windelband apud Müller, vol. v., p. 336.

serious studies by the praise of "divine philosophy" in the "Hortensius," a work now lost, a general introduction to Cicero's philosophic books, generously dedicated to his defeated rival in oratory.

The excursions of Cicero into some still remoter fields excited mirth even in his own day. A geography, demanded by Atticus, he found very laborious, the material resisting flowery treatment, as he complains. Yet the one sentence preserved by a grammarian's citation (to show that *quercus* may be of the second declension) is a gem: "There the boughs of oaks rest on the ground, so that pigs like goats may feed on acorns from the branches." All else is forgot. So true is Horace's word, "Books have a doom of their own!"

Ad Att., ii., 6.

Priscian, vi., 16, 83.

Of the impartiality, and objective view, required of the historian, few men have less. Moreover, Cicero entered this field expressly to record his own exploits. He began with a Memoir on his consulship, sent, of all men, to Pompey, then in the full tide of Eastern conquest. That cold and jealous spirit, naturally, could not stomach it.

So far as their imaginative power is concerned, his poems also can have been of little value. Here again his tireless self-consciousness misled him into composing at least three books on his consulate. The surviving speech of Urania, in seventy-eight hexameters, describing the omens that foreshadowed the Catilinarian plot, will suffice to allay all regret for this lost work. It is quoted by Quintus, against Marcus, to uphold the art of divination. A somewhat happier subject was his townsman Marius. This poem, probably an early one, is also cited in a similar manner by Quintus in the same dialogue, and the thirteen lines describe a vigorous contest between a serpent (Sulla) and an eagle (Marius). Again, the incursion of Cæsar into Britain inspired a laudatory poem.

De Divinatione, i., ii., 17 ff.

It is a curious illustration of our poverty, that these casual experiments by a skilful rhetorician are of real importance in the study of Roman versification: for Cicero supplies the only considerable body of hexameters between Ennius's "Annales" and the days of Lucretius and Catullus. Cicero in his early verse still ignores the final s, like Ennius, but has made a great advance over him in ease of expression and rhythm. This is best seen in the sustained translation from Aratos's astronomical poem, the "Phainomena," in four hundred and eighty hexameters. Despite its prominence in literature, this metre in Latin always remained alien, artificial, and somewhat difficult.

The influence of Cicero on Latin prose can hardly be overestimated. Editors, from his own faithful freedman Tullius Tiro onward, annotators, beginning with the excellent historical comment on the orations by Asconius in the next generation, have multiplied in every age. His works were never wholly lost, though many were rescued from oblivion and republished by Petrarch and Poggio. To this day, everyone who attempts to write classical Latin must simply peruse and imitate this supreme arbiter of style.

We must remember, however, that this kind of Latin was always somewhat artificial, and diverged widely from colloquial speech, as may be seen clearly by comparing the sonorous periods of any oration with the familiar key of a letter to Atticus. The popular speech has outlasted by many centuries the literary dialect. Indeed, the chat of street and market to-day in Trastevere may often be not so very remote from the speech of Plautus, or Petronius.

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The reader ignorant of Latin could have no better *cicerone* than Dr. Andrew P. Peabody, who included in his series of annotated versions the "Tusculan Disputations," the "De Senectute," "De Amicitia," and

the "De Officiis." The "Dream of Scipio" was translated by Professor T. R. Lounsbury for his "Chaucer." Specialists will be familiar with such works as Mayor's voluminous annotations on the "De Natura Deorum," and the labors of J. S. Reid on the "De Finibus," including an accurate translation. The tribute of Augustine, mentioned in the text, in so striking, and so inaccessible to many, that it may be transcribed here:

"Ego postquam in schola rhetoris librum illum Ciceronis, qui 'Hortensius' vocatur, accepi, tanto amore philosophiæ succensus sum, ut statim ad eam me transferre meditarer." (De Beata Vita, § 4.)

"Ille vero liber mutavit affectum meum et ad te ipsum, domine, mutavit preces meas et vota ac desideria mea fecit alia." (Confessions iii., 4, 7.)

The poems may be found either in Bährens's "Fragmenta" or in Vol. XI. of the Baiter and Kayser Cicero.

CHAPTER XIII

CÆSAR

THE life and character of the great Julius, perhaps the largest and most influential career in all history, can be touched upon here only to lead up to one question: the origin and purpose of the "Commentaries." They are not hasty field-notes of a campaigner. We have before us a simple masterpiece of style, as Cicero warmly testifies. It was created with the swiftness, grace, and apparent ease of genius, in the year 51 B.C. If intended to appease Cæsar's personal enemies and avert civil war, it failed of its immediate purpose: but as an appeal to after-time, as an *Apologia pro Vita*, it reaches a fresh jury in each age: not the reluctant children for whom its quaint doom makes it a parsing-book and first reader, but rather the Niebuhrs, Mommsens, and Von Rankes of every civilized race. On the whole the verdict upon the book, as upon the life, is one of hearty admiration and personal regard.

Brutus, 75, 262. Hirtius, Preface to B. G. viii.

Cæsar found himself amid forces which he could at best only guide, not escape. Above all, between the little senatorial oligarchy and the blind led city mob, there was no longer a true middle class, only the wealthy yet greedy *equites*, mostly engaged in farming the provincial revenues, after the present Turkish fashion, for their own immediate enrichment. The nephew of Marius, the son-in-law of Cinna, saved with difficulty from Sulla's keen and deadly eye, Cæsar was called from the first to be the leader of the mob. He wisely planned to be

Cæsar an Opportunist.



JULIUS CÆSAR.

Antique bust in the Capitoline Museum.

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its master, too. Much of his youthful dissipation, even if all the scandalous gossip of a Suetonius be given a hearing, may have been a screen against partisan or personal hatred. Certainly he was a profound student of history and literature, even a fastidious scholar, a consummate orator. Above all, human character was to him an open book.

Free from all superstition or religion, save a faith in his own destiny, he at thirty-seven sought and won the life-post of supreme pontiff, made an exhaustive study of ceremonial, wrote a careful treatise on "Divination." Cicero himself, blind to the ruin he is even then preparing for his own career by hasty illegal executions, already realizes that Cæsar has followed that path in politics which is accounted popular, nay, is "truly popular." The people love pious conformity. They also love the circus. The shows of Cæsar's ædileship had broken all records, and plunged the future high-priest millions deep in insolvency. One year as proprætor in Spain cleared off all debts. It cannot be claimed that Cæsar was careful of the property, or the life, of provincials.

Cæsar Pontifex Maximus, 63 B.C.

In Cat., iv., v.

Cæsar Ædile, 65 B.C.

Cæsar in Spain. 61–60 B.C.

The purely private and nowise illegal understanding with Pompeius and Crassus made Cæsar at least "second in Rome." The blundering selfishness and growing indolence of the lucky victor over effete Orientals must soon leave him first.

60 B.C. "First Triumvirate."

But now came the seven years of superhuman exertion, of voluntary exile, of constant personal peril, of unrivalled service to Rome. Slaying a million warriors of the Kelts, he utterly broke their spirit, and removed forever that nearest terror. Gaul indeed remained the best "pacified" of the provinces. Even the resistless Teutonic deluge he rolled back, perhaps

Campaigns in Gaul, 58–52 B.C.

167688A

delayed for four centuries. No Roman army or general ever performed a larger, more arduous, or more useful task.

In return he is invited home to face degradation, impeachment, probably an ignominious death. The army, a resistless weapon, is in his hand. Yet he waits patiently. While calmly setting forth his own unrivalled services, he still utters cordial approval of Pompey's belated measures to keep order in the capital. Why may we not believe Cæsar at least as sincere a patriot as Cicero? He may well have clung to the slow-dying republican forms, may have dreaded to see the greatest of orators cringing and flattering at a dictator's footstool, may have foreseen, even, the hatred and the daggers of a Casca and a Cassius, if not of the beloved Brutus or the ungrateful Ligarius. At least, he did long draw back from the gulf of war: refused to be Marius's successor in civic massacre: prided himself always that no fellow-citizen's blood shed in peace stained his hands. To Romans Cæsar was indeed always "*mitissimus atque lenissimus*," most gentle and most mild.

At the Rubicon.

De Bello Gallico, vii., 6.

Cicero, in Cat., iv., v.

The greatest, most instructive, most lucid, and calmest, of political pamphlets, the "Commentaries," are beyond doubt, also essentially true. As to the main facts, indeed, scores of public bulletins, thousands of eye-witnesses, compelled exactness. If the repeated assertions of Gallic treachery and aggression, of Cæsar's own reluctance to advance and clemency in victory, seem needlessly at variance with the appalling results in Gaul, Switzerland, Belgium, even in England and on the Rhine, we must remember that eager young advocates were always waiting to win fame and office by impeachments, as Cicero had assailed Verres, as Cæsar himself in youth had vainly attacked the less guilty Dolabella and Antonius. Cato had actually

Plutarch, Cæsar xxii., and Cato li., Bell. Gall. iv., xiv.

proposed that Cæsar be delivered over to a German tribe which he had mercilessly crushed.

Every student of strategy, like Miles Standish, every thoughtful reader of history, every lover of austere, lucid style, must turn these pages with delight, in maturity, unless they were spoiled for him by misuse in childhood. If our boys must read Cæsar, let them at least begin with the manners of the Germans, Britons, and Gauls, the curious beasts of the forest, or the picturesque first landing under the cliffs of Dover.

One would suppose the style alone of the Ariovistus-speeches would have warned off all humane educators. Such a mass of *oratio obliqua* exists nowhere else, in classical literature. Through all its mazes, even to the sentence where Latin syntax breaks down exhausted and its single reflexive squints four ways in as many lines, Cæsar's clear, remorseless logic leads us unerringly on. But as for the children who must follow such a piper—.

Bell. Gall., i., 36.

Cæsar's artistic purpose in this phase of his style seems plain. The arguments pro and con, in the cases both of the Helvetian migration and the Germans' raid, must be set forth. The use of interpolated speeches, with their elaborately fictitious rhetoric, he profoundly disapproved. So Herodotos, the master of all story-tellers, rightly refused to stop his swift dramatic action, as day dawned over Salamis, for Themistocles's set speech to his men. Instead, both authors give "the substance of what was actually said," in a form which, throughout every clause, recalls us to the unity of the narrative in the chronicler's mastery. That a very brief direct utterance could be used to heighten the effect of action Cæsar knew, and has shown no less skilfully.

Herod., viii., 83.

Thuc., i., 22.

E.g., B. G., iv., xxv.

The need of this protest against the rhetorical treatment of history is only too plain. With Cæsar's protégé Sallust

we have an immediate relapse. Livy with all his charm sins no less grievously. Finally, the chief critics of the Silver Age, even Quintilian, actually uplift Sallust to supreme honor beside Thucydides. Yet the "Gallic War" is to modern taste the undoubted masterpiece of Latin historical composition.

The "Civil War" is far less perfect. Even Cæsar's mind is distracted by the Atlantean tasks of his last years. The embers of civil strife were too hot to be trodden fearlessly. There is evidence of suppression, of special pleading, of haste, even of nervous excitement. This volume is indeed, at times, what Cæsar too modestly called the "De Bello Gallico:" raw material, a quarry for later historians. Yet this work also is precious, and we regret that the three books cover only two years. Doubtless this, like more important tasks, was rudely interrupted by Cæsar's death.

49–48 B.C.

The miraculous fact is, that this man of unrivalled energy in action, with equal genius for destructive warfare and for constructive statesmanship, was also second, and a worthy second, in the age of Ciceronian prose. The loss of his orations is to be deplored. Several we might perhaps restore, from his histories. His political pamphlet against Cato dead—Cato who had "cheated him out of the opportunity to pardon him"—must have been a curiously human document. Once while crossing the Alps he found time to write, and dedicate to Cicero, an excellent essay on "analogy," form in language, style. His favorite maxim was to use no queer, archaic, or unfamiliar word. His briefest billets are among the gems of the Ciceronian correspondence.

The one extant specimen of his excursions into literary criticism, and into verse, gives us a lively hunger for more. It is the judgment on Terence, already mentioned, preserved in the poet's biography:

Supra, p. 50.

"You moreover, although you be but the half of Menander,
Lover of diction pure, with the first have a place, and with reason.
Would that vigor as well to your graceful style had been added.
So your comic force would in equal glory have rivalled
Even the Greeks themselves, though now you ignobly are vanquished.
Truly I sorrow and grieve that you lack this only, O Terence."

The Eighth book of the "Gallic War" was added by Cæsar's loyal officer and friend Hirtius. It covers both 51 and 50 B.C. In supplements to the "Civil War" again, the Alexandrian African and Spanish campaigns are treated by various unpractised hands, apparently veterans of these wars. The value of these essays is wholly in their contents. The form is awkward, in part even illiterate, not to say barbarous.

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Plutarch is a far more edifying biographer than Suetonius. The hearty words of Cicero on the "Commentaries" ("Brutus," 75, 262), are remarkable, because his own style is so remote from Cæsar's. The two men evidently admired, even loved, each other.

Cæsar's best eulogist is Mommsen. See especially his Roman History, Book V., chapter XI. Fowler's Julius Cæsar is the best English biography. Napoleon III.'s work is valuable for its illustrative plans, maps, etc. School editions of the "Gallic War" are numberless. Moberly has edited the "Civil War" in handy form.

Translations of Cæsar need no bush. Capital is the rapid spirited summary, with citations, by Anthony Trollope, in a volume of a most useful, unpretentious series, the "Ancient Classics for English Readers."

CHAPTER XIV

SALLUST AND NEPOS

GAIUS SALLUSTIUS CRISPUS.

SALLUST'S career, as we hear of it, seems to illustrate the worst tendencies of his century. The long quarrel with Milo is said to have been begun in a sound beating received from him as a righteously enraged husband. As tribune in 52 B.C. Sallust aided vigorously in overawing Milo's defenders, among whom Cicero was the chief, and driving him into exile. His expulsion from the senate by the censors, in 50 B.C., may have been a political move, but the reason given was "notorious immorality." By devotion to Cæsar he won restoration to his senatorial rank, some military distinction, and a proconsular position in Africa, where in one year he accumulated immense wealth. His subsequent trial for extortion took place before the dictator, who may well have winked at a too faithful copy of his own methods in Spain. Sallust's splendid gardens on the Quirinal remained for centuries a favorite residence of the emperors.

B.C. 86–34.

Vide supra, p. 78.

Sallust outlived his leader, and, apparently in the luxurious idleness of his last years, became ambitious to win fame as a writer. He chose for his first attempt the Catilinarian conspiracy: an excellent subject for a monograph. But his essay, of twelve thousand words, is not a good piece of historical work. He assumes, from the first words, an austere philosophic attitude, a contemptuous

superiority to vulgar mortals. But the phrases are turgid and hollow, the thoughts commonplace and unlinked, the anxiety as to his own damaged reputation comes presently to the surface. His sketch of old Rome is vague and ideal, meant for rhetorical contrast. The color grows somewhat more definite as he describes the evil effects of Sulla's Asiatic conquests: but the scandals of Catiline's youth, the general growth of corruption and insolvency, etc., are described from general knowledge or hearsay, and we get little evidence of real investigation.

Cat. iii. ad fin.

Ibid., xi.

Considering his political and personal quarrel with Cicero, the general fairness of the main account is creditable. The speeches give an air of realism to the story, until we perceive that they are all inventive products of the same rhetorical taste as the general narrative. This is, indeed, a capital offence of ancient historians generally against our own code of truthfulness, and is frankly avowed by Thucydides, whom Sallust consciously emulates but never approaches. Thus Cæsar's speech in the senate, to save the conspirators' lives, would be highly interesting if authentic: but the very opening words are a mere echo of the resounding first sentence in the essay itself. The best touch is the picture of the lawless, violent city mob, ready to join Catiline in success, prompt to turn against him in failure. The contrast between Cæsar and Cato, which follows their speeches, is clever, and appears to show clearly that Cæsar is now dead. Indeed, if living, that exquisite master of true simplicity would perhaps have pruned away much of Sallust's rhetoric. The composition might well have appeared in 44–43, which would account for the respectful treatment of Cicero.

Cf. supra, p. 101.

The close of the essay is in quiet good taste. In general the whole is worthy of careful, critical perusal, by a mature

student. For school-room use it has fatal faults already indicated, and one other: an occasional coarseness, in words and thought, too common in Roman utterance. Especially do we feel this when women are mentioned. So much, at least, the age of chivalry has still left us in the West,—a preference for clean words.

The second essay, on the Jugurthine War, is twice as long. The pretentious philosophizing of Chapters I.–IV. may be skipped. Sallust's residence in Africa had given him opportunities, which he appears to have used with some care, to gather local data. We are told much which we hear from no other source, and are disposed to accept as probably true. The narrative is interesting, and generally well told. The ethical purpose claimed, to lay bare the insidious and dangerous corruption of the old Roman morality, is, naturally, much the same as before. Chronology, and exactness generally, appear to be sacrificed at times to dramatic and rhetorical effect.

From Sallust's third and largest undertaking, a history of the years 78–67 B.C., there remain only speeches and letters, with scanty other fragments. These indicate a decided progress in rhetorical ingenuity.

Judged by his extant books, Sallust is by no means to be ranked among the world's great historians. In method of investigation, in impartial presentment, in taste and in force, the single youthful work of Francis Parkman on the "Conspiracy of Pontiac," for instance, is incomparably superior to Sallust's essays. Yet in the glamour of his subjects, in abundance of accessible data, in limitless means and leisure, the Roman had every advantage.

As to Sallust's style, tastes will differ. His curter sentences, his sudden changes of construction, his archaic words, appear to many students far-sought, ineffective, tawdry. Yet it is all a remarkable performance for such a man, beginning so late one of the most arduous of tasks.

CORNELIUS NEPOS.

Of this respectable minor member in the Ciceronian circle little is known. His long life ran nearly parallel with Atticus's. He was born north of the Po, like Catullus, Virgil, and many other leading authors, and had very possibly Keltic blood in his veins. His letters to and from Cicero are missing from the general correspondence, though the latter once remarks "*Nepotis epistolam exspecto*," but Macrobius quotes from the second book of a special collection. He was an intimate friend of Atticus, apparently like him a publisher. His life appears to have been a peaceful one: at least, again like Atticus, he avoided any dangerous prominence in the fierce politics of the first century before Christ.

Ad Att., xvi., 5. 8.

Macrob., ii., 1, 14.

Nepos was a voluminous, superficial, careless, rather graceful and readable scribbler on historical subjects. Catullus, in the dedication of his verses, alludes roguishly to his friend's three ponderous volumes on universal history. He prepared also an encyclopædia of biography, in sixteen or more sections, filled up alternately with Roman and foreign worthies.

As his unquestioned work are extant lives of Cato the Censor and of Atticus. The latter is an elaborated eulogistic biography of from four to five thousand words. The former, already cited, comprises barely four hundred, but refers at the close to a monograph on Cato "separately," made at Atticus's request. The extant sketch, then, was in the collection.

Supra, p. 31.

In another MS., and accredited to an Æmilius Probus as author, are preserved twenty-three brief biographies of foreign commanders. Probus is otherwise known only from an epigram, of six faulty lines, in which he offers his *Carmina*, poems, to the Emperor Theodosius. But the easy

pure Latinity of these sketches dates from no such semi-barbarous source or time. The coincidence of idiom and style with the two unquestioned essays con-
Theodosius, 378-395 A.D.
vinces nearly all scholars that these twenty-three sketches are also a remnant of Nepos's cyclopædia of biography.

In truth the whole question is of trifling importance. Our extreme poverty in ancient Latin books suited for childish readers has given this third-rate hackwork a standing in schools: that is all. In substance, and in the real interest of a genial, live personality, Gellius, for instance, is greatly his superior: in fact, far better Latin essays could be safely manufactured in either Cambridge to-day.

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As to Sallust, the text traverses the favorable judgments of some modern critics, and of the "Silver Age" in Rome. Martial says Sallust will remain "Primus Romana in historia": Tacitus calls him "auctor florentissimus." Quintilian's yet more surprising enthusiasm has been already mentioned.

The style of Sallust cannot be indicated in translation. A convenient though not critical American edition of the two monographs, by Stuart, includes a vocabulary. Latin students who escaped Sallust in their school-days will find him instructive and not uninteresting to their maturity.

For Nepos there are school editions in abundance. The Atticus biography is, of course, an authentic and valuable document, on a wholly different level from all the other lives. For the table of contents to Cato's "Origines," also, we chance to be indebted to Nepos.

CHAPTER XV

MARCUS TERENTIUS VARRO

THE long life of Varro makes him almost a link between the good old times of the Scipios and the Augustan age. His supreme rank as an antiquarian and general scholar, with the survival of two volumes from his pen, demand for him a share of space. Even his lost verses must be mentioned with hearty regret. Yet nothing can more clearly illustrate the prosaic character of Ciceronian literature, or indeed the derivative and scholastic nature of Roman letters generally, than the relative prominence of such a career.

116-27 B.C.

Varro's verses, written in early youth, raise once more a vexed and perhaps insoluble question, for they are called "Saturæ Menippeæ." That the Grecian, or rather Syrian, Menippos was a Cynic philosopher of the third century before Christ is agreed. In his attacks on the Epicureans and others he dropped into occasional verse, chiefly for the purposes of parody and ridicule. They are not supposed to have been dramatic. Lucian is in some sense his disciple. Among the Varronian fragments most are metrical, others appear to be plain prose. The sarcastic tang is often strong.

Cf. Quintilian, x., i, 95.

We have nearly *six hundred* fragments, mostly mere grammarians' citations for a rare word or phrase. *E.g.*, "I don't see a thing, Varro; this *longshanks* (longurio) in front of me, whoever he is, shuts off the light so!" They are too brief to show any dramatic quality, but are at least often in the form of dialogue. The poet's own name appears in titles, as Marcus's Slave, Double Marcus, etc.,

or he is directly addressed. Though the thought is almost always homely, the form is at times really poetical. Thus:

"Not gold, not treasures, win the heart's release:
The cares and burdens of the mind, nor mountains
Of Persian wealth, nor Crassus' splendid halls" . . .
(Can banish) . . .

This clearly anticipates Horace's favorite strain.

But, bitterly regretted, this curious collection is hopelessly lost. The clearest glimpse is accorded by Gellius. He summarizes the satire entitled: "Thou knowest not what late evening brings," which he thinks the daintiest of all. The general subject seems to be banqueting as a fine art. The first aphorism is the graceful one that the diners should be not less in number than the Graces, nor more than the Muses. Guests should be chosen neither loquacious nor taciturn. The discussion should not be mere shop-talk, yet while enjoyable it should have a certain practical value: saith Roman Varro. Over the dessert Gellius slides off into a discussion on the proper Greek and older Latin words for sweetmeats. Quite possibly Varro had done so himself, philology and rhetoric being never very remote from the scholarly Roman poet's or banqueter's mind!

Gellius, xiii., 11.

These one hundred and fifty Menippean "books" may or may not include the four books of Satires, ten of poems, six of pseudo-tragedies, also mentioned.

The first illustrated Roman work which is recorded was Varro's "Imagines," in fifteen books. It had apparently a hundred plates, with seven portraits on each. The division into professions, and the alternation of Roman and foreign worthies, remind us of Nepos's cyclopædia of biography. Besides other text, each picture had an *Elogium*, or metrical epigram, not always from Varro's own hand.

The lost encyclopædic works of Varro cannot even be

catalogued here. The "Antiquitates Rerum Humanarum et Divinarum" ran to forty-one books, the nine "Disciplinarum Libri" treated grammar, dialectic, rhetoric, geometry, arithmetic, astrology, music, medicine, architecture. The civil law, geography, history of drama and the theatre, were included among Varro's specialties. Yet this great rival of Aristotle's industry survives only in two modest volumes.

ON THE LATIN LANGUAGE.

Of the twenty-five books on the Latin language there remain only six, V.–X., in a rather tattered, interpolated, and corrupt form. They inspire us with much respect for Varro's zeal, energy, and patience, very little for the methods and theories of ancient philology. He shows little advance in sobriety on Plato's "Cratylos." In form, of course, he in no way approaches any Platonic dialogue. The book is simply a rather discursive dictionary of etymology, which often hits the truth but rarely approaches the scientific method. The citations of older authors, the real and many-sided learning of the writer, give the work a value in other than etymological fields.

An example may be taken at random. The meaning of the word *latro*, robber, he thinks can be carried back through freebooter, mercenary, guardsman, to king's attendant. Varro derives it from *latus*, side, because the *latro* was at the king's side, and wore the sword at his own : *i.e.*, "He who stands beside," and "the side-arm man." That in Greek a mercenary's pay is called *latron* seems to him to clinch the matter. The lighter wit of the interpolator adds, that "anciently the royal courtiers were called thieves but were not, while now the conditions are reversed." In such a frivolous frame of mind, indeed, this work of Varro's as a whole is best enjoyed.

ON AGRICULTURE.

"I would rather have elaborated at leisure, would now fain write more fully, Fundania, that which I shall here set forth summarily, realizing that haste is needful: for as the saying is, if man is a bubble, so much the more is an old man. For my eightieth year admonishes me to gather up my baggage, ere I depart out of life."

Rerum Rusticarum Libri iii., 37 B.C.

The three books on Agriculture thus genially begun do not, after all, show signs of nervous haste. Only the first volume is dedicated to his wife Fundania, the second and third to men otherwise little known.

Varro imitates his departed friend Cicero in using the dialogue form, and also in setting a new scene for each book. Of dramatic skill there is little indeed. The machinery creaks and all but breaks down. The divisions of the subject are pedantic and over-elaborate. The life-long fondness for punning etymologies, and for "old buried lore" generally, breaks out at every turn. Yet few can fail to gain renewed love for the subject, love and admiration for the sturdy, patriotic, learned writer, food for thought and stuff for mirth, from this little-read classic.

We are heartily glad that Cæsar smilingly "pardoned" Varro for taking Pompey's side, and sent him back to his books, even put him in charge of the state libraries: doubly glad that, even when the name of the old sage at seventy-three was placed on Antonius's bloody proscription-list, he was smuggled away and finally saved. With him we have passed the portal into the age of Augustus, and must turn back to the poets: for this century of violence included the short career of two world-poets, the two clearest and most original voices that ever uttered, in Roman speech, a message to the after-time.

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Though Varro must always be aside from popular interest, both his books should be far more generally known to classical students. The "De Agricultura" is united with Cato's in the edition of Keil. The "De Lingua Latina" is learnedly treated by Spengel. The fragments of the "Saturæ" are added by Bücheler to his edition of Petronius. The few *elogia* cited from the "Imagines" are collected by Bährens, Vol. VI., pp. 295–96. For the last two entries see also Merry's "Fragments of Latin Poetry." For bold attempts to reconstruct some of the "Saturæ Menippeæ" from the rather meagre remnants, the student is referred to Ribbeck, "Römische Dichtung," Vol. I., pp. 242–65, and also Mommsen, "Römische Geschichte," Book V., chapter XII.

CHAPTER XVI

CATULLUS AND HIS FRIENDS

THE poetic instinct, if it exist, in a whole folk, must reveal itself in brief flights of song, in lyric. Such utterance requires no theatre of stone or wood, no stated audience, no bookish culture, not even the ability to read or write. The *improvisatori* of the Tuscan valleys are often illiterates. Uhland was a learned antiquarian, but Johanna Ambrosius is a toiling peasant. The older ballads of Scotland and the Border sang themselves out of a people's heart. Nothing of this kind can be descried among the Latins. Their love and hate seem wingless. Perhaps a Sappho, or even an Archilochos, born there, would have remained mute and inglorious under Cato's frown.

But the Social War broke down the barriers of Roman citizenship, which was now extended throughout Italy. It ended, also, the narrow provincialism of the Roman speech, so boldly confessed, indeed overstated, by Cicero a quarter-century later. Latin now everywhere swiftly supplanted the Oscan and other spoken Italic languages. Over the Keltic dialects it must have made a truly Roman conquest. In general it rendered every free Italian a Roman in spirit as in law. Thus Rome's most signal defeat brought her renewed vitality. This is especially notable in literature.

90-88 B.C.

Pro Archia, x., 23.

The plain of Lombardy, the great valley of the Po, was technically a foreign province. Probably its people were

already a blend of Keltic with Latin stock. From this region came a surprising number of leading Roman authors. Cæcilius, and Nepos, we have mentioned already. The precise descent and stock of a Catullus, a Virgil, a Livy, can never be known: but it must be remembered that Rome absorbed the energies not only of Italy but of the Mediterranean world. While to the last the imperial mint-mark is stamped on every Latin utterance, yet the gold of genius is drawn from many veins.

Supra, pp. 49, 107.

The one poet whose clear, importunate "lyric cry" is still heard, out of that age, came from Verona. Yet Catullus certainly appeared, in his day, not alone, but as one of a brilliant, audacious group of "young Romans." Furthermore, this movement was in large part a scholarly one. In oratory and rhetoric it was a reversion to Attic simplicity, with Lysias as a model, against the Asiatic floridness which Cicero, on the whole, shared with his dethroned rival Hortensius. In poetry the same men studied the finished forms, approved the briefer compass, of Alexandrian art, ridiculing the ponderous mass of Ennian or Nævian epic, as Callimachos had assailed Apollonios the Rhodian, the composer of epics.

G. Valerius Catullus, 84 (?)-54 (?) B.C.

In politics, of course, these young radicals attacked the great men of the day, Pompey and Cæsar, though Catullus finally had to make his peace with the latter. That the rather pompous and arrogant old age of Cicero was also embittered by their ridicule is proven by passages in his last books. In oratory at least Brutus was one of this new school.

Cf. infra, p. 124.

Catullus was probably far above his forgotten brethren in genius. In his brief roll of twenty-three hundred verses there is quite sufficient evidence of Alexandrian influences. But it is the elemental cry of his own savage, sensitive youth that is deathless.

"I hate and love:—no more I know,
Save that I'm racked with mortal woe."

His hatred, it may be said at once, is usually expressed in words so foul as to be utterly unfit for repetition. It is astonishing that so true a poet could cast such vile thoughts in verse-forms. We are disposed to judge by them the age quite as much as the man.

Catullus squandered several of his few years on one lawless and consuming passion. The famous "Lesbia" seems to have been, beyond serious doubt, Clodia, the beautiful and shameless sister of Cicero's enemy, Clodius. If so, Cicero may have first brought the lovers together, by refusing Gaul as his own proconsular province, and handing it on, instead, to Lentulus, Clodia's husband, who in Cicero's consular year was prætor, that is, next in official rank. Hence Catullus's wealthy parents doubtless entertained Lentulus and his wife, as they certainly did in later years the great Julius, on his winter circuits through the province. In her affections the poet was apparently afterward supplanted by that Cælius Rufus whom Cicero later defended.

62 B.C.

Suetonius, Cæsar, 73.

Cf. supra, p. 77.

In 57–56 Catullus served in Bithynia on the staff of Memmius, whose greed sent the youth home with empty pockets, as he went. Some lyrics in cheerful tones were certainly written after his return, but he cannot have lived much longer. The early death of the poet is foreshadowed in his despairing verses, and is referred to in Ovid's elegy on Tibullus, who will meet in Elysium kindred spirits of like fate. Among them

Carm., 10.

"Thou, oh learned Catullus, thy young brows ivy-encircled,
Bringing thy Calvus with thee, wilt to receive him appear."

This "learning," like the "wit" of Queen Anne's day, consists mainly in careful mastery of classic forms and

myths. Catullus certainly has, in his lyrics, no such recondite mythic lore as Callimachos, or Horace. He had studied, and even translated, the famous Sapphic stanza, with its sudden pulse-leap midway in the verse :

> " Blest to me he seems as a god immortal
> He who face to face as he sits may hear thee
> Sweetly murmur, listens in eager longing
> Unto thy laughter."

But the next quatrain of Catullus's poem names Lesbia, and is of course his own composition. In Catullus, as in all true singers, the metre chosen seems the only possible form for the thought. Both his grand passions, love and hate, were most forcefully uttered in a livelier form of "hendecasyllables," not grouped in stanzas, and with the skip at the second foot instead of the third. Of this rhythm every modern echo, even Tennyson's, though

> "All composed in a metre of Catullus,"

is notoriously faint and far indeed. Sir Theodore Martin, prince of verse-translators, gives it up in comic despair, after a few ventures like

> " Whóm shall I give this pretty little book to,
> New and fresh from the polish óf the gritstone?"

Yet lovers of Latin agree, that into this jaunty, monotonous line Catullus somehow puts music, variety, tenderness, biting force, the full natural utterance of his two chief moods, in which Heine is his nearest kinsman. Friendship is with him but a phase of passionate love. We, however, crave some more familiar English lilt, as the ungallant poet rails at a mischievous hussy :

> " Give back the book, thou shameless dame,
> The book, thou dame devoid of shame ! "

or with half-hidden pride and roguish banter offers his sheaf of brief lyrics, his "dainty little book and new," to Nepos, himself a bard of passion, though he

> "Into three tomes had dared to cast
> The story of all ages past:
> —Learnèd, oh Jupiter! and vast!"

In hendecasyllables are the happy poems on Lesbia's countless kisses, the odes to her pet sparrow living and dead, and indeed most of the unforgettable lyrics. Catullus and his friends would have little patience with our well-beloved virtue of *reticence*. Rather they cry:

> "Whate'er thy flame may be,
> Or good or evil, tell it me.
> Thy flame and thee to heaven on high
> In dainty verse I'll glorify."

As Ovid has told us, Catullus's real heart's-brother is not Nepos, but Licinius Calvus. After a day spent with him in scribbling and comparing erotic verses, he writes:

Carm., 50.

> "Licinius, from your wit and grace
> So feverish homeward did I pace,
> No food consoled me thus distrest,
> Nor slumber closed my eyes to rest.
> I tost and turned the livelong night,
> Eager to see the dawning light,
> Only once more with you to be,
> And, speaking, hear you answer me."

A calmer comradeship, and the merry poverty of extravagant youth, is revealed in a curious note of invitation, which Martial honors with close mimicry. Perhaps Fabullus had strained a slight acquaintance and begged the dinner.

Carm., 13.

> "The days that pass shall be but few,
> Fabullus, ere with me you dine,

And richly. Only bring with you
Abundant viands, salt, and wine,
Some charming girl, of jests no end,
You might go farther and fare worse:
But, for Catullus, your 'dear friend,'
'Tis only cobwebs fill his purse."

The poems thus far mentioned are all in the eleven-syllable verse. For a more pensive key Catullus uses a less swift iambic or Alexandrine line, not unlike our blank verse in its effect. The best-known example is the poem on Sirmio, the lovely peninsula at the southern end of the Lago di Garda. The later Roman structures whose ruins are now seen there may have displaced the summer abode of the poet's family. There are few tenderer words of home-coming.

Carm., 31. "Sirmio, pearl of all the capes and isles
Or in pellucid lakes or savage sea.
What is more blest, than when, from toil released,
The spirit drops her burdens, and outworn
With alien labor to our own hearthstone
We come, and slumber on the longed-for couch!"

Similar in rhythm and tone is the dedication to Castor and Pollux, the patron saints of mariners, of the yacht in which he had safely returned from Bithynia, and which had been laboriously brought up the Po and Mincio to dear, billowy Benacus.

Carm., 4.

It need not be supposed, then, that Lesbia's lover died of a broken heart, or cut short his years by a desperate struggle to drown grief in dissipation. In any case, he faced death as fearlessly as he did life. In immortality he has no shred of belief. It is amid Lesbia's warmest kisses that he utters what are perhaps his most famous lines:

"Each sun that sets at dawn returns.
For us, when our brief candle burns,
One endless night of slumber waits."

The first sixty poems of the extant collection are all very brief, chiefly in hendecasyllables, or other light, swift measures. The little roll dedicated, in the opening poem already cited, to Nepos included not more than these, perhaps less. There seems to be no principle of arrangement whatever.

Numbers 65–116 make up a separate collection, being all in elegiac couplets. They were not, however, written later than the iambics and hendecasyllables. Poems even from the early and happier Lesbia-period are found in this group also. The rhythm is somewhat labored, the utterance is less spontaneous. Yet often it fits the thought, as in the attempt to console the bereft Licinius.

Carm., 96. "If there is aught, my Calvus, that out of our sorrowing offered
Unto the voiceless dead grateful or welcome may be,
When with the hunger of grief we recall our former affection,
When for the ties we lament, broken, that once were our own,
Though Quintilia grieve at her own untimely departure,
Over thy faithful love greater, be sure, is her joy."

Yet the hope which he suggests for his friend he himself put firmly aside, not merely in Lesbia's arms but at his brother's lonely grave in the Troad. Hailing in vain the silent ashes, he bestows the poor gifts that usage demands:

Carm., 101. "Receive them, wet with loving tears, I pray;
—And so farewell forever and for aye."

The poems numbered 61–64 are relatively long, and require separate mention. 61, in forty-seven swift stanzas of five lines each, is the chief classical example of the *Epithalamium* or Marriage-song. The tone is light, and some portions are too free in expression, even for such an occasion. Yet it is a gem unrivalled in its kind. He who could so glorify the nuptials of his friends, Manlius Tor-

quatus and Julia, could not have utterly missed the path to earthly happiness for himself. Certainly, as an artist, this truly Roman master-singer proves his right to every Hellenic suggestion which he chooses to make his own. The movement, the merriment, the joyousness can be shared by every sympathetic reader. Especially tender and truthful is the expression of hope,

Carm., 61, vss. 216–220. Translation of Sir Theodore Martin.

"Soon my eyes shall see, mayhap,
Young Torquatus on the lap
Of his mother, as he stands
Stretching out his tiny hands,
And his little lips the while
Half open on his father smile."

Next is a far more formal hymn in sixty-seven liquid hexameters. It is in form a choral dialogue, between a band of youths and one of virgins, each stanza closing in a line with quadruple invocation of Hymen. The maidens bewail the cruel doom that snatches the bride from her mother's arms. The youths, naturally, have the first and last word, urging the happiness, the naturalness, the necessity of wedlock.

Carm., 62.

The next poem, entitled Atys, is by some critics called the finest in the language. In its special class, of miniature epic or sustained narrative lyric, no other has such dæmonic force. If it had no Greek original, then Catullus in Asia, and especially amid the lovely glens, peaks, and pine-forests of Ida, had received a direct Hellenic inspiration, whose results may be compared with the choral splendors of the "Hippolytos," or the loveliest harmonies of the Initiates in the Aristophanic "Frogs." Yet the subject is not merely painful but abnormal, and anything but universal in its interest. The youthful acolyte of Cybele, who mutilates himself irrevocably in his frenzied enthusiasm, and then in a moment of

Carm. 3.

sanity impiously laments the home, comrades, gymnasium, race-course, all the joyous social life to which he can never return, is far indeed from our life. We can only vaguely hope that the returning frenzy was life-lasting, and echo the closing prayer

Vss. 91–92.

"Goddess imperious, Cybele goddess, mistress holy of Dindymos,
Far be from my abode, thy madness, mighty queen, afar from us."

Those who have known familiarly and learned to love, and dread, the forest-clad heights that yet frown upon the Trojan plain, can never wholly escape the spell of this marvellous poem, in whose very movement the mystic awe still lingers. Memories of youthful Wander-years will always respond to such strains as

Vss. 70–71.

. . . "And must I ever on the snow-clad regions of green Ida pine,
And linger on 'neath Phrygia's frowning peaks while weary life is mine?"

Longest of all the poems is the "Wedding of Peleus and Thetis," in four hundred and seven hexameters. This is also masterly, at least in detail. The digression describing the embroidered coverlet of the bridal couch takes up more than half the poem: vss. 50–266. However, the adventures of Ariadne, there depicted, are quite as interesting as the main theme.

Carm., 64.

A curious oversight has been noted. Peleus first beheld Thetis when she and her sister-Nereids rose to gaze at the Argo, the first ship that ever troubled the Ægean waters. For navigation to develop, for Cretan Minos to become lord of the sea and conquer Athens, finally for him and his daughter Ariadne to pass into legend and become subjects of a work of art, would require a courtship of several

centuries: immaterial to divine Thetis, but serious indeed for her mortal lover.

The solution is, however, absurdly simple, if we may suppose that the gods can foresee the future. So Æneas's shield, an imitation of Achilles's, contained scenes from later Roman history. This explanation of Catullus' poem is the more plausible, because the real culmination of the little epic or idyll is the prophetic song of the Fates, set to the whir of their own spindles, foretelling the whole life of the hero Achilles, who is to spring from the wedding that day celebrated.

There are echoes of many Greek lyres in this poem, most of all, perhaps, reminiscences from the art of Apollonios the Rhodian. Yet it is not believed to be a translation. Indeed, the cumbrous structure, "sphere in sphere," is hardly equalled, even in the awkward Hesiodic "Shield of Heracles," and betrays the lyric singer, essaying a task too huge for his simpler art.

In several of these larger poems Catullus has justified Ovid's adjective *doctus* (learned), by recondite allusions and conceits little to our taste, but in this especially we realize that the exquisite parts are better than the effect of the whole, while even they are far inferior in force to the keen shafts of scorn, or the briefer winged missives of love, sped by this true Italian poet. He more than all others, as Professor Sellar has said, showed what youth can accomplish, and what it cannot. In the unashamed audacity of youth Catullus stands forth forever, fiercest of haters as of lovers.

The recognized leader of this youthful school was not Catullus, but a namesake, Valerius Cato, who also came from the North. He was both grammarian and poet: not an incongruous union in Rome. Whether he was the real author of the poem "Diræ," transmitted as Virgil's, is still debatable. Like that author he celebrated his beloved

under the name of Lydia, and had lost his estates in the reign of terror under Sulla. The latter event is prominent in the poem, and may have caused the assignment of it to Virgil.

Cf. Virgil, Bucolics, I.

Calvus, a short-lived lyric poet like his friend, has been mentioned repeatedly. He was especially brilliant as an orator. Praise of his eloquence, and a gibe on his diminutive stature, are combined in a merry five-line poem of Catullus's. His father, Licinius Macer, a careful historian, had been impeached by Cicero for extortion in 66, and escaped only by suicide. This must have sharpened the antagonism between the pair of poet-friends and the great orator. The little greeting to Cicero from Catullus seems full of gratitude, extravagant praise, and humility: but the last is surely overdone. Moreover, by a sort of refrain these verses are linked with two of Catullus's most audacious lampoons. The circumstances of the day may have made this missive anything but agreeable, despite the assurance

82–47 B.C.

Catullus, Carm., 53.

Carm., 49.

> "Most eloquent, Marcus Tullius,
> Art thou of the sons of Romulus."

To another versifier, Cornificius, our poet in utter heart-break complains of his silence, and begs:

> "Give me a word of greeting, what you please,
> Sadder than tear-drops of Simonides."

Carm., 38.

A far happier epistle goes from Catullus in Verona to Cæcilius in Novo Como, as an invitation for a visit. There are teasing references to a girl, herself "more learnèd than the Sapphic muse," whose clinging arms may detain the expected guest.

Carm., 35.

Not all these fading names, to which several more could be added, were ever important, but at least a numerous

friendly band of quick-witted versifiers, chiefly Transpadanes, can be pleasantly descried. Helvius Cinna, like Calvus, was of more purely Roman and noble stock. He served with Catullus in Bithynia. His chief poem, "Zmyrna," was an elaborate idyll on an obscure mythical subject. Finally, as a slave and freedman in the Cinna family we hear of Parthenios, a Greek, a late member of the Alexandrian school. His personal relations with Roman poets can be traced as far down as Virgil and Gallus. Through him Catullus may have received the *doctrina* of which we are glad he had no more. "Berenice's Hair," in particular, is Catullus's labored translation of a lost poem by Callimachos, full of courtly adulation and ill-placed ingenuity.

Carm., 10; 35; 95.

Carm., 66.

But from all this group one clear voice reaches us. This surely is no accident, but indeed a survival of the fittest.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

There are metrical translations of all or nearly all Catullus's poems by Sir Theodore Martin, James Cranstoun and Robinson Ellis. The latter indeed, in "three learnèd tomes" has given a variorum Latin text, an exhaustive comment, and a translation "in the metres of the original." The latter is not always easy either to scan or to construe. Both the others omit, or soften beyond recognition, the more savage lampoons. The few versions by Professor Jebb and Goldwin Smith leave a lively desire for more. See also the paper contributed by the present author, in *Macmillan's Magazine* for January, 1897.

Vexed questions as to Catullus's life are avoided in the text. The especial stamping-ground of polemic is Carmen 68, a complicated elegiac construction full of subjective allusions. Jerome sets Catullus's birth and death 87–57 B.C., but there are undoubted references to events as late as 55, *e.g.*, Cæsar's invasion of Germany and Britain (Carm., xi., 11–12).

There is an excellent American edition of Catullus by Merrill.

CHAPTER XVII

LUCRETIUS

CATULLUS'S life is revealed to us in his intensely personal lyric. Indeed, his loves and hates, his longing in absence or his exultant home-coming, his fleeting earthly bliss and despair of more lasting happiness, alone interest vitally the hearer, or the singer.

The other surviving poet of that stormy age is personally all but unknown. He wishes to share with us only the elemental hopes and fears of rational humanity. He is in touch with Catullus at one point. Lucretius, also, believes that man has no eternal life, no spiritual essence, no need to concern himself with aught beyond his own passing day. But while to Catullus that is the bitter truth, to be drowned in the wine of Lesbia's kisses, for Lucretius it is a central, nay, the central doctrine out of which happiness, or contentment, may be won. This austere consolation is to wipe the tears from all eyes. It is a very gentle admonition on the folly of grief, when he says, first quoting the common cry :

Book III., vss. 894 ff.

" 'The joyous home shall welcome thee no more.
Thy noble wife and well-lov'd children ne'er,
Running to be the first thy kiss to snatch,
Shall with a silent joy thy bosom fill :
For one disastrous day has wrested all
The many precious things of life from thee.'
Yet this they add not : 'Nor shalt thou again
By any craving for them be assailed.'

Could they but see this rightly, and conform
Thereto their words, then would they free themselves
From that great anguish and distress of mind."

Even his picture of the universe is drawn purely to convince men of their own material and finite nature, to remove from our thoughts all trace of foolish hope, and yet more of corroding dread, as to any other worlds, or superhuman beings. Many, if not most men, find a lofty consolation, compounded far more of hope than of fear, in the belief that the wrongs of the present life are elsewhere to be set right. Lucretius, however, certainly felt that the terror of future judgment and punishment is the chief bugaboo and curse of existence. He was convinced, also, that he could efface such superstition absolutely from any clear, courageous, and attentive mind. Thanks, above all else, to Epicuros,

Book I., vss. 78 ff.

"Religion now is trampled under foot
In turn. His victory lifts us to the skies.
This do I fear, lest you perchance suppose
Impious the grounds of reason which we tread,
Sinful the path. Nay, all too oft that same
Religion bore unholy wicked deeds":

and the slaying of Iphigenia is thrillingly portrayed,

"A stainless maid, who at her bridal hour
Fell, a sad victim, by her father's stroke. . . .
Such crimes religion could suggest to men."

The atomic theory of Democritos, the ethics of Epicuros, the impossibility of life beyond death, the practical non-existence of deity, are set forth with power, earnestness, logical consistency, and what then passed for scientific learning, in these seven thousand hexameters. The attempt is made to explain consistently all physical phenomena, including the origin, development, and eventual destruc-

tion, of life, and even of the world itself. The philosophic breadth of scope, the benevolent purpose, at least, are evident. The imaginative beauty of literary art we might be less confident to find. But in truth this austere rhythmic essay, On the Nature (or Origin) of Things, is the chief creative feat of Roman imagination. The minor charms of the poem, its digressions, episodes, illustrations, would alone suffice to raise Lucretius to Virgil's side. A simple list becomes beautiful, even pathetic. Thus to exemplify the microscopic smallness of the atoms, he says:

Book I., vss. 311 ff.

"So after many circlings of the sun
A ring beneath the finger wears away
In use, the drip of water from the eaves
Hollows a stone, the ploughshare's iron curve
Invisibly decreases in the fields,
We see the pavement worn away beneath
The people's feet. . . .
But yet the particles
Which at each instant still therefrom depart
Envious Nature will not let us view."

In particular, the latter half of the Fifth Book is the most vivid and fascinating ideal picture ever drawn of man's origin and progress from the cave to culture. At times we hear Darwin's very tones:

Book V., vss. 855-59.

"And many genera of animals
Must then have perished utterly and passed,
Since all we see, that breathe life-giving air,
By craft, by valor, or, again, by speed,
Saved and protected from the first their race."

Still other passages there are, notably the opening forty lines, in which the pious, patriotic Roman seems, at least, to forget altogether his disconsolate atheistic materialism. Here Venus and her lover Mars, the divine ancestors of the Æneadæ, are rapturously portrayed. The poet indeed

must have had, as Tennyson makes him assert that he did, some double purpose. Venus may be also a symbol of cosmic love, attraction, even gravitation. She, and Mars as strife, repulsion, the other source of all life and force, may have as parabolic and mystic a meaning as the Platonic *Eros* and *Eris*. To the conservative Roman, however, this invocation would seem absolutely orthodox. A later passage gives us the key.

Book II., vss. 652-57.

"If any choose, Neptune to call the sea,
To speak of grain as Ceres, or misuse
Bacchus, not give the liquor its true name,
So may we let him call the rounded earth
Mother of gods, if he in truth forbear
With foul religion still his mind to stain."

But not the details alone are poetic. Even the Lucretian Cosmos itself, lonesome, dreary, and lifeless though it be, appeals, perhaps for that very reason, with terrific power to our minds. From the haunted memory we can never wholly banish again that infinite snow-storm of silent atoms, moving for countless ages through endless emptiness.

Book I., vss. 1002-5.

"Such is the nature of unbounded space
That gleaming lightnings cannot traverse it,
Though gliding on through endless lapse of time,
Nor even lessen by a jot the way
That still remains to go."

A homelier figure, that grows no less memorable, is the javelin-thrower, taking his stand on any terminus we may imagine, only to cast his spear out into further space again and ever again.

In truth the study of Lucretius will eventually leave, in the sensitive mind, a world-picture fairly comparable to Dante's mediæval conception, or to the great drama of the

Iliad, where the Olympian council watches the struggle before Troy, while Thetis, Iris, and Hermes glide heavenward or earthward, and Pluto leaps in terror from his throne lest the earth be rent above his head. Less bright than Homer's, less agonizing than Dante's, the Lucretian Cosmos has its own weird, lonely charm. Indeed, the beauty of natural objects is set forth, in many passages, with such truth, tenderness, enthusiasm, even reverence, that Professor Shorey calls the poet a Pantheist after all, akin in some moods to Wordsworth, rather than a true materialist.

The miracle of creation is reduced to a minimum: to the unexplained "swerve" or eddy that brings atoms into mutual contact and so, through endless change and chance, produces at last this world, and numberless others like it. All that now exists has been, and shall be reproduced, again and again in the ceaseless lapse of time. That matter is indestructible is well taught and illustrated.

Book I., vss. 248 ff.

"Therefore no thing returns to nothingness,
But all, dissolved, to atoms still revert.
So lastly die the rains, when father ether
Hath cast them on the lap of mother earth.
Yet goodly crops arise, the boughs turn green
Upon the trees, that heavy grow with fruit.
Hence too our race is fed, or herds of beasts,
Hence gladsome towns we see with children teem . . .
So naught that seems to perish dies indeed.
Nature from other each replenishes,
Nor will permit that aught shall come to be
Unless by death provided otherwhere."

Many results of modern science are amazingly foreshadowed. Yet many guesses, again, are purely childish, as when the sun and moon are made little more than floating bubbles, pressed upward by the earth's superior weight, and hardly larger than they appear to our eyes. The law

of perspective is emphatically denied, self-evident though it seems. The most radical fault is the failure to appreciate motion or force, as no less indestructible and vital than matter. Hence sound, heat, even cold, are to Lucretius but subtle, permeating substances. Vision is produced by thin actual films, thrown off by all bodies as perfect images of themselves, and actually reaching our eyes.

Thus far it is attempted in some degree to arm the reader who would undertake the consecutive perusal of Lucretius's pages. Yet such an attempt is hardly to be safely made by the beginner, or by a student in any sense immature. Thus the twenty-seven detailed arguments against the soul's power to outlive the body, while by no means all equally cogent nor even plausible, may throw a lasting gloom over the mind. One passage of two hundred and fifty lines should be omitted altogether, in decent regard for modern reticence.

In general it must be constantly remembered, that, like nearly all Romans, Lucretius set his didactic philosophic aim high above all poetic adornment. As he repeatedly says, he would but sweeten the edge of the cup, from which men are to quaff the bitter yet salutary wormwood of truth.

Yet in this volume our chief concern is with Lucretius as a poet. In creative force, in a sense of vastness and sublimity, in noble, sonorous, somewhat monotonous rhythm, he is more akin perhaps to Milton than to any other master. Like the blind singer of "Paradise Lost," also, he stands in scholarly and philosophic aloofness from an age which he disdains.

Book II., Ad Init. Version of Goldwin Smith.

"'Tis sweet, when tempests lash the tossing main,
Another's perils from the shore to see;
Not that we draw delight from other's pain,
But in their ills feel our security;
'Tis sweet to view ranged on the battle plain

The warring hosts, ourselves from danger free :
But sweeter still to stand upon the tower
Reared in serener air by wisdom's power ;
Thence to look down upon the wandering ways
Of men that blindly seek to live aright,
See them waste sleepless nights and weary days,
Sweat in ambition's press, that to the height
Of power and glory they themselves may raise."

Some such scholarly repose as is here revealed was also Epicuros's ideal of happiness, so grievously distorted by his hostile critics.

There is a less famous but no less restful passage, which illustrates, what is still held as an essential truth, that atoms or molecules lead their unceasing dance, like motes in the sunbeam, though the mass which they compose seems itself at rest. Emerson's "Each and All" may well have gained some touches from this picture.

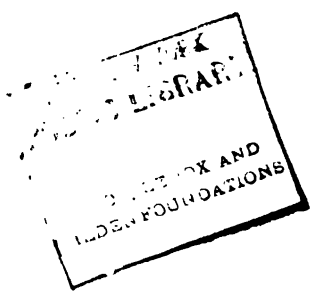
Book II., vss. 317-32.

"For often woolly flocks upon a hill
Seize on their welcome food where'er the grass
Gemmed with fresh dew invites and summons each ;
The lambs, well-sated, play and butt in sport ;
Yet all commingled, seen by us afar,
Seem one white spot upon a verdant slope.
Or when again the mighty legions fill
With movement all the regions of the plain,
Waging a mimicry of war, to heaven
The glitter rises, and the whole earth round
Gleams with the bronze, while tramping feet beneath
Make uproar, yea the shoutings of the host
Smiting the mountains echo to the stars ;
The horsemen wheeling dash across the fields,
Shaking them with the fury of the charge ;
—And yet upon the heights there is a spot
Whence all doth seem one glimmer, motionless
That lies upon the plain."

Of course there is much in this unique volume that is



FALLS OF THE ANIO AT TIVOLI, THE ANCIENT TIBUR.


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not poetry. At times indeed, waging keen polemic against some Greek heresy in physics, the philosopher complains over the added difficulty self-imposed by the metrical form, or over the lack of technical Latin nomenclature wherein to state his case. Yet he is a true poet, and one who by his noble art is raised high above the turmoil of daily life, yet remains in loving sympathy with his kind. This manly pride of the artist in his own superhuman craft, so common in every Greek land, is here met on Latin soil for the first time since Ennius. It lifts this materialist and atheist, this scientific foe of all supernatural faith, into a region of idealism where Plato himself would welcome him. Whatever the final verdict on his chief doctrines, there are many gems of his thought still to be shared and prized by all lofty thinkers.

Yet surely there is something unnatural in his whole attitude. The artist, seeing and revealing the order, the unity, of Cosmos, striving to reconcile men to its laws, seems the last who should deny the existence of the supreme Artifex, the Demiurge of the universe itself. The loftier his thought, the more this lack is felt, as if the keystone of the heaven-scaling arch were wilfully broken away.

Thus Lucretius comes very close to the esoteric belief, that what men call past and future events are not really remoter than the present moment:

Book I., vss. 459 ff.

"Time is not, of itself, but from events
The senses apprehend what has occurred,
Then what approaches, what is next to come.
No man is conscious, it must be confessed,
Of Time itself, abstracted from the movement,
Or placid rest, of things."

But in Plato, in Emerson, even in Tennyson, the explanation follows at once, that all events lie together in the

consciousness of an omnipresent, all-powerful deity. The true mystic even holds that all phenomena really exist only in the divine mind: Our world may be but His Dream.

The only passages—not to mention the figurative uses of divine names already cited—where Lucretius concedes the existence of gods, read almost like a mere prudent concession to popular feeling. In a few lines plainly borrowed from the Odyssey, and re-echoed by Tennyson, both in his "Lucretius" and in the "Passing of Arthur," perhaps yet again in the "Lotus-Eaters,"

Supra p. 129.

Book III., vss. 18–24.

"Appear the powers divine, their peaceful homes
Unshaken by the winds, where clouds pour down
No rain, nor snow congealed by biting frost
Falls white and harmful. Cloudless is the sky
Above them. In the radiant light they laugh.
Nature supplies all needs of theirs, and naught
At any time their peace of mind impairs."

But in truth there is no place, in the unresting atomic dance, for this changeless, eventless, aimless race or realm. In a far more consistent and earnest argument the philosopher later denies that the gods can have had any share in making the world, or any present control over it. Again, in one of the noblest passages, the origin of superstition and traditional rites is sketched with fearless hand. We should prefer to have, frankly uttered, what seems to be the logical conclusion: Such beings could never be known to man even if existent, and the chances are infinitely against their existing at all. But from this position Lucretius, like his master Epicuros, shrinks: whether from fear of men's displeasure, or in the lingering dread of possible divine power and wrath after all, may be debated.

Book V., vss. 146–94. Cf. II., 646–51.

Book V., vss. 1161–1241.

Yet this is not by any means a world without justice. Lucretius would lay the whole responsibility, for his use of life, on each man. Having temperately enjoyed all the pleasures of the banquet, the guest should cheerfully depart to his long repose. But the sensual sinner, the cruel tyrant, and their kind, will have their due punishment of mind and body in this life. This, again, is exactly the doctrine of Plato's "Gorgias," while even in Dante's "Inferno" the allegorical application to our present world is often clear.

In general we should marvel, not at flaws or incongruities in Lucretius's scheme, but at his mighty constructive genius; not at his scientific errors, but at his many shrewd discoveries and prophetic guesses; finally, not that his poetic genius flags at times, that the scientific demonstration wearies or the didactic tone grows strident, but that so much of charm, such lasting interest, is upon the whole diffused over the entire mass of ungrateful material. This is the most modern of all classical essays in the scientific field. It is the most instructive, in many of its parts the noblest, of all Latin poems. As a whole the Georgics, doubtless also the Æneid, must be pronounced more cheerful, and even more entirely poetic. Yet there are many patriotic national epics, only one apotheosis of materialism.

The single hexameter of Lucretius has a noble, resonant harmony. The variation in pauses is not sufficient, and the general effect is one of breathless haste. The poem is marred by some repetitions, and by far more serious gaps. In general it lacks the final finish, and has also suffered severely in transmission. In the single manuscript from which all existing copies were derived some entire pages were already missing.

The poet is clearly an aristocrat, thoroughly cultivated and accustomed to luxury, but quite aloof from political

life. The story of his madness, caused by a love-philtre, and of his suicide, has been made familiar by Tennyson's poem.

The work is repeatedly dedicated to a certain Memmius. This is supposed to be the general of whom Catullus speaks rather bitterly as rapacious and ungenerous to his staff. By chance we have from Cicero full proof that Memmius had no sentimental feeling as to Epicuros, Lucretius's revered master. Memmius had bought in Athens a plot of land on which stood, in ruinous condition, Epicuros's house. Though he had abandoned the idea of building on the site, he had refused to make over the precious relic, on any terms, to the Greek Patro, head of the still existing Epicurean sect. Furthermore, Cicero appears to know that Memmius shares his own utter abhorrence for the doctrines of the school. This adds a final touch of tragic loneliness to Lucretius's personal fortunes.

Catullus, 10 and 28.

Epist. ad Fam., xiii., 1.

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The lifework of Professor H. A. J. Munro, building on the learned foundations laid by Lachmann, has accomplished nearly all that can ever be done for the direct elucidation of Lucretius. Munro's three volumes, critical text, comment, and prose translation, are alike masterpieces. The American edition by Professor Kelsey adds helpful references to modern scientific works, but unfortunately contains a comment only on Books I., III., and V.

The Lucretius in the Ancient Classics series is by W. H. Mallock. His copious citations, and also the renderings by Goldwin Smith in his "Bay Leaves," are in the eight-line stanzas of Don Juan. In another volume Mallock has served up bits of Lucretian thought in the form of quatrains made familiar by Fitzgerald's Omar. The blank-verse attempts in the present chapter lean heavily on Munro's prose.

The excellent essay by Professor Shorey in the Warner "Library" furnishes an analysis of each of Lucretius's six books, and further references to English and foreign works. The exact relation of Lucretius's guesses to modern scientific theory is at least broached, but hardly exhausted, by Masson in his "Atomic Theory of Lucretius."

CHAPTER XVIII

THE DECAY OF DRAMA

THE brief and exotic life of tragedy and comedy, as serious art-forms, in Rome, has been repeatedly indicated The popular forms of amusement in this age were, rather, elaborate processions, contests of strange animals with men or with each other, and, above all, the gladiatorial games. Under such competition even the coarse Atellan burlesque could no longer hold its own, and gave way to the yet more debased and debasing *Mimus*.

The combination of song, dancing, and conversation in this latter performance suggests a comparison to a modern extravaganza with ballet. That female parts were actually taken by women only assures us of the utter degradation to which the theatre had fallen. Costumes were at times scanty indeed, or even dispensed with altogether. Of reticence or propriety in subject or treatment there was not even a pretence. From such debasement some attempts were undoubtedly made to elevate even this brutally coarse form of popular amusement: but the taste of the mob itself could not be purified. The best-known theatrical incident of Cæsar's dictatorship brings together the two most eminent authors of mimes; a Syrian freedman and a respected Roman knight; and the victory in such an arena fell, naturally enough, to the alien and ex-slave.

As to the mimes of Publilius Syrus, or the Syrian, we know curiously little. Though still performed in Seneca's day, even the titles have perished, except two. The only considerable fragment, on Luxury, quoted by Petronius,

offers little save a list of imported fowls such as the peacock, capon, stork, and a similar string of costly gems. There remain, however, between six and seven hundred single lines, accredited to Publilius, of a gnomic and aphoristic character. Of course such commonplaces are current coin all the world over, and no man can claim property in them. Yet considering its ignoble origin, this collection is by no means to be despised. A few lines will fairly illustrate the quality of all.

"Expect from others what you do to them."
"Hatred, and Love, no third, a woman knows."
"Others admire our treasures,—and we theirs."
"He claims the more, to whom too much is granted."
"Hardly a god against good luck can fight."
"They hate us also who have done us wrong."
"Endure, not rail at what cannot be changed."
"Tears of an heir are smiles behind a mask."
"Greed nor to others nor itself is kind."
"Foolish he who for a second shipwreck blameth Neptune still."
"Treat your friend as if aware how easily he turns a foe."
"Least is that mortal's need who least desires."
"No peril without peril is o'ercome."
"O Life, in woe too long, for joy how brief!"
"Who bears the older wrong, invites the new."

Such are the sifted grains, some even of them blasted and bitter enough to the taste. The chaff is vanished forever. In many cases the dialogue seems to have been improvised, at least in large part.

A much more definite glimpse is accorded of the Roman knight, Decimus Laberius. Some forty titles of his mimes remain. "The Hot Springs" is a good setting for a social satire. "Lake Avernus" and "Necromancy" might be travesties of more sacred themes. "Fisherman," "Poverty," "Saturnalia" have a homelier sound. But from a verse or two no play can be restored.

105-43 B.C.

Though bold and happy in expression, most of these scant surviving lines are vulgar or commonplace. Some sparks of Nævius's daring temper, however, the dictator Julius may well have noted, when with unusual refinement of cruelty he made the request, which from him was a command, that the wealthy and proud-spirited graybeard should play a part in his own mime. With the story is preserved the Prologue in which the dramatist bade farewell to his social rank :

B.C. 45.

Macrobius, II., 7.

"Necessity, 'gainst whose opposing force
Many have wished, few had the power, to strive,
Hath dragged me—whither, with my failing force?
I whom no bribery of gold or place,
No fear, no violence, no authority
Could move from my decision in my youth,
Lo! in old age am easily dislodged,
At the mere gracious wish of a great man,
Uttered in soft gently persuasive words.
Nothing to him could gods themselves deny:
Who, then, would suffer that I should refuse?
I, whose twice thirty years were without stain,
Came forth a Roman knight from my abode,
Homeward return a mime! Ah me! My life
Is one day longer than I should have lived."

The tale of Laberius's own fortunes need not be read as darkest tragedy. He retained at least his sense of humor, the power of caustic speech. In this very play the people watched Cæsar chafe helplessly at such lines, put into the mouth of a whipped slave, as

"Up! Romans, ere we lose our liberties,"

and again,

"Many he fears perforce whom many fear."

Cæsar gave his own vote for Laberius, and when, overcome by the popular cry, he had assigned the dramatist's

prize to Publilius, he handed to the degraded knight a generous purse: and also the gold ring which restored his social rank. It is said that when Laberius attempted to resume his seat among his former class, in the orchestra, Cicero, in particular, met him with a scornful "I would make room for you if I were not so crowded." The latter phrase cut also the many new senators, of ignoble origin, admitted by the dictator. But the retort came promptly back: "Curious, if *you* are crowded, always accustomed to sit on two stools!"

But it is really pathetic, to think that all the refinement of Cæsar's court, all the wealth and luxury of the world's capital, had no drama save this. The disdain even of a Cicero for the professional artist is a thoroughly national and Roman scorn. Some such patrician contempt for professional mastery can be seen at times even in Athens. Phidias himself may have been stigmatized, it is said, as a mechanic; but one can hardly believe that Pericles had any such Philistine narrowness. While Aristophanes donned the mask that no other Athenian dared assume, and played the part of Cleon to the demagogue's face, the foremost gentlemen of Athens appeared in their own characters as the choristers of the "Knights." So Pericles certainly jested as a social equal with his fellow-general Sophocles, who had played his own Nausicaa in his youth, and excused his retirement from the stage by his weak voice. Jonson if not Shakspeare, Racine if not Molière, were the companions of the forgotten great men of their day. When little Weimar was glorified by the great pair of poet-friends, the young duke himself was an amateur member of the actors' guild. Sir Henry Irving is an honored name in any drawing-room. Doubtless the Romans of the dying republic had such a theatre as they deserved, such art as they could appreciate: and patronize.

CHAPTER XIX

RETROSPECT AND PROSPECT

WHATEVER be the true date for the creation of the empire, the republic did not outlive Cicero. In 44–43 is heard for the last time real discussion in the senate, or any serious pretence of elections by the people. Thereafter both assemblies merely register the decisions of their master. At most, it was a question, for a few years, whether Lepidus or Antony should share in any degree Octavian's control over Italy. His grip on all the effective forces was never shaken. His reign of almost sixty years outlasted even the memory of the old régime.

That régime had never been a real democracy like Periclean Athens. The provincial world was fortunate, to escape a rapacious oligarchy and receive instead a single master. Even Italy could but welcome rest, after a hundred years of internecine strife and chaos.

But literature, as the free utterance of a free people, now became as impossible in Rome as it had been already for centuries in Greece. No Catullus could again arise to defy Cæsar, or Cæsar's favorites. No Cicero could hurl Philippics at the oppressors of the nation, or ridicule the worship of a mortal man. On the contrary, the first authentic utterance of the loftiest Augustan poet takes up at once the burden of most abased adulation.

Virgil's Bucolics, I.

"O Melibœus, a god unto us this leisure accorded.
Yea, for to me a god will he be forever. His altar
Often a tender lamb of our fold shall stain with his life-blood."

For a half-century the eyes of mortal Augustus beheld these altars of his own worshippers. Such ignoble fetters the arts of imperial Rome wore to the end. That pathetic final scene in the great orator's career in December of 43, then, does not merely leave an indelible crimson stain on young Octavian's ascending chariot-wheels, but marks unmistakably the close of an epoch.

With the sole exception of Lucretius's poem, republican Rome offers no great creative and imaginative masterpiece. Catullus's piercing cry has no national character. Like Archilochos, Villon, Heine, or de Musset, he simply finds in verse a needful relief for his own tortured heart. Some strains appeal mightily, indeed, to wider human feelings, but he would have cared little or nothing for that. The epics of Nævius and Ennius cannot fairly be judged, but either would probably now seem a naïve record of early Roman legend and patriotic pride, rather than a treasure of art. Of the Romans' drama, again, no one has now a right to speak positively, but at best they themselves permitted it to languish, long before freedom was utterly lost.

So we are largely dependent for material on history and oratory, two fields which are but upon the border of artistic literature. Cæsar's Commentaries, for instance, have a certain beauty and charm in their unadorned simplicity, yet they were written, and are preserved, for instruction rather than for enjoyment. Xenophon's narrative of the retreat of the ten thousand has far more grace, though less historical importance.

In truth the largest literary gift of republican Rome to later men, unless it be Lucretius's bold voice of negation, was the lucid, copious, rather ornate style of the orator Cicero. As has already been emphasized, the peculiar virtues, the chief legacy, of this sturdy people must be sought in other fields: as, architecture, law, political organization.

100–43 B.C.

Political Events.		*Cicero's Career.*		*Literary Events.*	
B.C.		B.C.		B.C.	
100	Birth of Cæsar.				
				97	Birth of Lucretius.
91–88	Social war. Italians defeated, but their demand for Roman citizenship granted.	91	Cicero studies law under Mucius Scævola the augur.		
88	Mithridates massacres Roman traders and overruns Asia. Sulla and Marius both claim the chief command against him. Sulla wins the honor. Marius and Cinna seize the city and proscribe their enemies. Death of Catullus, Antonius, and many other leading men.				
		86 (?)	"De Inventione." Translations from Plato, Xenophon, Aratus. Poem on Marius.	86	Birth of Sallust.
				84	Birth of Catullus.
83	Return of Sulla. His dictatorship. Restoration of the oligarchy, proscription of Marians.				
		81	Oration *pro Quinctio.*		
		80	Cicero defends Sextus Roscius Amerinus, accused of parricide.		
79	Abdication of Sulla.	79–77	Travels in Greece and Asia.		
		77	Marries Terentia.		

CHRONOLOGICAL TABLES—*Continued.*

Political Events.		*Cicero's Career.*		*Literary Events.*	
B.C.		B.C.		B.C.	
76–72	Pompey campaigning in Spain against Sertorius, who is finally assassinated.				
		75–74	Cicero quæstor in Sicily.		
74–67	Lucullus in command against Mithridates.				
71	Gladiators and slaves under Spartacus defeated by Crassus, the remnants crushed by Pompey.				
		70	Cicero impeaches Verres for extortion in Sicily. By his success becomes foremost pleader in Rome.	70	Birth of Virgil.
		69	Cicero ædile.		
66	Pompey destroys the pirates of the Mediterranean.	66	Cicero prætor. Oration *pro lege Manilia.*		
65	Pompey ends the Mithridatic War.			65	Birth of Horace.
64	Pompey crosses Asia.			64	Quintus Cicero's "De Petitione Consulatus."
63	Pompey in Palestine. Flight of Catiline, death of his partisans. Cæsar becomes Pontifex Maximus. Birth of Augustus.	63	Cicero consul. Speeches against Catiline, for Murena, etc.		
61	Cæsar in Spain.	61	Oration for Archias.		
60	Political cabal of Cæsar, Pompey, and Crassus: "First Triumvirate."	60	Letter to Quintus (II.) on Provincial Government.		
59	Cæsar consul.			59	Birth of Livy.
58	Cæsar takes command in Gaul. Defeats Swiss and Germans.	58–57	Cicero in exile.		

56		Cicero defends Cælius Rufus.	
55	Cæsar invades England and Germany.	"De Oratore."	
54		"De Republica" begun. Poem on Cæsar.	54 (?) Death of Catullus.
53			Death of Lucretius.
52		Trial of Milo. "De Legibus."	
51–50		Proconsulate in Cilicia.	
49	Civil War. Cæsar marches to Rome. Pompey flees to Greece.	Cicero with Pompeians.	
48	Defeat and death of Pompey.		
47	Alexandrian War. Cæsar in Egypt.		
46	Pompeians in Africa crushed.	"Brutus." "Orator."	
45	Pompeians in Spain defeated at Munda. End of the Civil War. Cæsar perpetual dictator, empowered to name all magistrates.	"De Finibus." "Academica." "De Natura Deorum." "De Senectute."	Contest in mimes of Laberius and Publilius.
45–44		"Tusculanæ." "De Divinatione."	
44	Antony and Dolabella consuls. Cæsar, preparing for war with Parthia, murdered on March 15th. His grandnephew Octavian comes to Italy and enlists troops as a private citizen. He aids Antony's enemies. Antony goes to Cisalpine Gaul and is declared a public enemy.	"De Fato." "De Amicitia." "De Officiis."	
44–43		"Philippics."	
43	Antony defeated and in great straits, but Octavian comes to terms with him and Lepidus. "Second Triumvirate." General proscription.	Dec. Death of Cicero.	Birth of Ovid.

BOOK III

THE AUGUSTAN AGE

(43 B.C.–14 A.D.)

CHAPTER XX

REPUBLIC AND EMPIRE

It is a belief rooted deep in our racial consciousness, that all the noble crafts prosper best in the air of freedom. It seems no mere coincidence, that Athens, the most democratic of ancient states, where not even the ballot but the lot filled almost all offices, where comedy dared assail any and every citizen with merciless gibe and slanderous accusation—was also the greatest art-centre the world has ever seen. Florence, Nuremberg, Shakespeare's England, may perhaps also make claim to have been at once centres of art and bulwarks of human liberty. Certainly some forms of expression, like oratory, can hardly flourish at all under tyranny.

Yet there is another side to the tale. Many a race has passed through freedom into license, and anarchy at last, but left no songs or statues behind them. Again, the free Swiss, dwelling secure so long in the very garden of the high gods, have in all their centuries given the world no poet. It was a courtier of a German princeling who immortalized their chief legend in "Wilhelm Tell." A loyal Dane carved the Lion of Lucerne.

Not all men, not all races, deserve to retain their freedom. Few indeed have been strong enough to maintain themselves, and yet so wise as to resist the temptation to seek foreign conquests. Such acquisitions can be held only by force, and martial law becomes almost inevitably centralized in absolute power. As Rome's sway widened, her aristocracy dwindled to an oligarchy. Masterful chiefs at

first, like the Scipios, refused continuous power. Even Sulla abdicated, the blood-thirsty Marius and the clement Julius were early cut off: yet every experience was making clearer the need of an emperor.

Octavian, a mere youth, quite without official position, raised legions chiefly by the magic of his dead uncle's name. That Cicero's party meant, or hoped, to push "the boy" aside as soon as Antony should be crushed, is more than probable. But steering his course masterfully, profiting even by the bloody proscriptions which he may have deprecated, he quickly made himself the real lord of Rome. The term "Augustan age" may fairly be extended over nearly sixty years, and forms a singularly well-defined epoch in literary art.

43 B.C.–14 A.D.

While every author, indeed every Roman, is henceforth an obsequious subject, and even a conformist, at least, to the popular worship of the living emperor, yet we shall be reminded often that the generation of Horace and Livy had known, and long remembered, the freer if more turbulent days of old. Augustus himself encouraged much frankness and independence of speech; nay, he even shared the lingering national pride in a past so radically different from his present.

The world as a whole was now to enjoy such tranquillity as it had never before known. Wealth and trade increased, despite the exactions of tyrants and their tools. The Latin and Greek languages were growing all but universal. Both must have been heard, for instance, not merely in Jerusalem, but in the village street of Bethlehem. Men of genius from every race and land could hope for a career in the metropolis. Dionysios, the greatest of ancient literary critics, Diodoros the historian, Strabo the geographer, lived and wrote their Greek works in the Rome of the early empire. The saintliest of Roman emperors is enrolled as a Greek, not as a Latin author. Plutarch re-

turned of free choice to his Bœotian hamlet, but was offered court favor, and doubtless wealth also, by the emperor. Josephus the Jew, who wrote in Rome the story of his own campaigns against Titus, was but the greatest of many such captives. Indeed, the wealthy Romans generally owned, more or less absolutely, the philosophers who educated their children. Of culture, therefore, as of all coarser luxuries, Rome was indeed the centre.

It is not strange, surely, if gifted authors, from wide-sundered birthplaces, crowd the first century of imperial Latin letters. They are Rome's, if at all, chiefly by right of conquest. Poetry especially, as an elaborate self-conscious art, flourishes. But it is hard indeed to find an artist without a patron. Confessing the general truth, it will be needless to point constantly to the collar. Nor will it be denied, that true heroes and philosophers have existed in every station of life, from a Marcus Aurelius on the imperial throne to that kindred spirit, Epictetos the slave. Indeed, of these two it might be questioned which was more truly free.

In some respects the conditions were most favorable to letters. The custom of authors' readings, in a more or less select circle, must often have been salutary, though it might easily become an insufferable fad, as the satirists assure us it did. Both this usage, and the creation of a public library, are accredited to the cultivated and critical Asinius Pollio, of whom there will be more to say.

Augustus undoubtedly held the firm conviction that his long, unwearied career was beneficent to the Romans and to the world. This is expressed, with truly imperial confidence, in the only large utterance of his that has survived. It is a record, in thirty-five chapters, of the offices and dignities held by him, of the gifts in money, entertainments and edifices lavished upon the people, and finally of his exploits in war and peace. This simple, dignified statement,

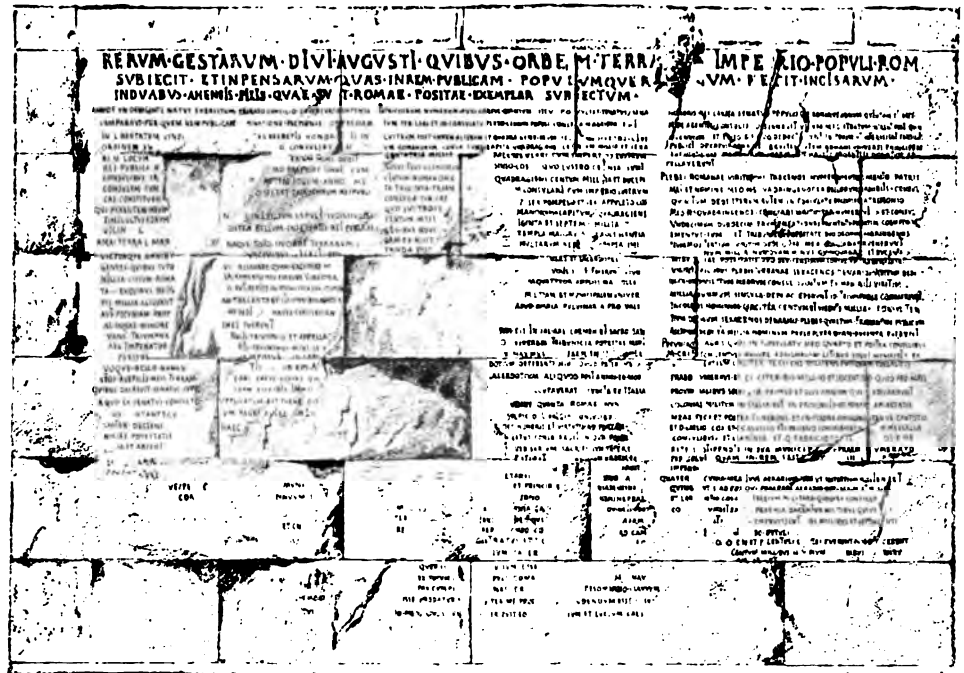
not all unworthy of Julius himself, was intended to be set up before Augustus's mausoleum. There remains, however, only a copy, upon the walls of a temple at Ancyra, itself dedicated to "Augustus and the goddess Rome." Distinctly regrettable is the loss of Augustus's historical memoirs, in thirteen books.

So wise an observer as Mommsen is inclined to believe that the world has been happier under the best of the early emperors than at any other epoch. Yet to most men the selfishness, the wasteful luxury, the brutal vices of imperial Rome, above all the terrible sufferings of the early Christians there, make her glory hateful. Again, the ravages of later barbarism have stripped away the gleaming façades, the splendor of bronze and gold, and left at best the rough, rude core of many a lofty structure: so that Augustus's boast recoils in mockery upon his memory.

As Clough exclaims,

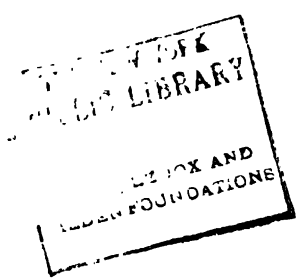
> "'Brickwork I found thee, and marble I left thee!' their emperor vaunted;
> 'Marble I thought thee, and brickwork I find thee!' the tourist may answer."

A more enduring gratitude, even a more lasting memorial for himself, Augustus secured by gathering about him the ablest poets of his day, relieving them from want, and encouraging their highest activity. Most clearly does this appear true of Virgil, the first and best-beloved of them all, the only Roman rival of Lucretius. Passing mention may be made of Augustus's own hexameters on "Sicilia," —probably an account of his campaign against Sextus Pompey,—or the tragedy on Ajax, the fate of which has been already mentioned. A single coarse specimen of his Epigrams is cited by Martial. But not even an imperial author can force posterity to preserve his commonplace work.



LATIN TEXT OF THE TESTAMENT OF AUGUSTUS.

On the temple wall at Ancyra.


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MÆCENAS

We must also mention the man whose name, yet more than Augustus's, had become typical of the generous, tactful patron. Though doubtless a trusted adviser at all crises, Mæcenas was hardly a great statesman or minister in the modern sense. For that, indeed, Augustus's own activity left scanty scope. Mæcenas was especially successful as a diplomatic and conciliatory envoy. The famous journey to Brundisium, shared and chronicled by Horace, postponed for some years the inevitable break between Octavian and Antony.

In less strenuous times Mæcenas lapsed into luxurious dissipation, perhaps largely to avoid that jealousy on his master's part which appears to have overtaken him after all. We know just enough of Mæcenas's literary ventures to be assured that his style was inflated, labored, and painful, while his matter was anything but noble. At least, his best-known sentiment is a peculiarly un-Roman one, a prayer for the continuance of life on any terms, though racked with every possible torture.

POLLIO

A much larger figure in literature, and perhaps the last representative of republican frankness and fearlessness, was Gaius Asinius Pollio. He was indeed a survivor of that audacious youthful group about Catullus, who calls him a

> "Boy well-skilled in witty device and jesting."

His refusal to join the campaign against Antony was tempered by his audacious offer to be himself the victor's prize: a scornful acceptance of the inevitable. Yet his tongue at least was never enslaved. Some of his severe

criticisms have puzzled all later students. Few indeed can find in Livy's style that provincial *Patavinity* of which Pollio complained. His dislike for Sallust may more easily be shared. Cicero's florid graces were also satirized. Nor did Pollio echo Cicero's warm praise of the great Julius's Commentaries, which he thought full of credulity, lapses of memory, and graver sins against truth. He even believed that Cæsar, if he had survived to old age, would have recast the work altogether.

Pollio's history of his own times in seventeen books, beginning with the "first triumvirate," is a document whose loss is still to be deplored. The Græco-Roman tragedies of such a man can be spared, even though Virgil himself, with friendship's partiality, tells of the

"Poems of yours that alone are worthy of Sophocles' buskin."

But again we are recalled to the best-beloved of poets. Messalla, more nearly than Pollio a rival of Mæcenas as a patron of letters, will be mentioned on a later page.

Infra, p. 220.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

This chapter is chiefly a digression into historical fields. Pollio's bold remarks on Cæsar's books are cited by Suetonius, Cæsar, § 56. His opinion of Cicero is preserved, and is the chief fragment of his history. See Peter, *Historicorum Romanorum Fragmenta*, pp. 264–65. Mommsen's special monograph on the Monumentum Ancyranum is a masterpiece.

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VIRGIL, HORACE, AND VARIUS AT THE HOUSE OF MÆCENAS.

By Ch. F. Jalabert.

CHAPTER XXI

VIRGIL

THERE is probably no literary question that has been so exhaustively discussed as the poetic merits and rank of Virgil. No serious student will accept here the mere dictum of another. The problem is one on which men may well change their views decisively, with lapse of years and fuller study of art and life. Comparetti, the great Italian scholar, calls the Æneid "a poem which never, before or since, has been equalled." This is essentially the faith of the Romance peoples generally, to whom Virgil is still "the poet." On the other hand, an even more famous German scholar, Niebuhr, says: "The whole Æneid, from beginning to end, is a misdirected thought."

Virgil was by nature a lyric poet. Even in the Georgics, the episodes, the details, are more precious than the pleasing general effect. The attempt to give unified epic treatment to all Roman story, from Æneas to Augustus, was in itself impossible, and a task under which this gentle yet reluctant singer sank utterly overburdened. But they who deny most confidently that the Æneid is the successful masterpiece of national epic, have abundant admiration for these marvellously sweet, ever-varied, hexameter verses, in which is heard, for the first time, the full vibration of pathetic human sympathy. Yet this very charm of Virgil, the tears and thrill of sadness in every utterance, would alone debar him from the largest seat. Pathos is, after all, not the chief chord in the harp of Life.

Man is the highest object of human interest. Virgil

has created no character who is fully alive and familiar to all men. His Æneas is unreal and uninteresting to the end. The poet lacks that complete vision of life which makes the Iliad, or the Commedia, quite as dramatic as the Antigone or Alkestis. One person, nevertheless, Virgil has taught us to know, and to love with intimate and passionate tenderness; the melancholy weary singer Publius Vergilius Maro himself. But we know only the artist, the dreamer, the spirit, not a man in the world.

Rarely indeed is found in Virgil's work such a satiric thrust of mother-wit as Lucilius or Horace loves to deliver. Perhaps only one such verse is famous:

"Verily ever a fickle, a changeable creature is woman."

And that loses half its force because it is put, most incongruously, into a god's mouth, just when the cold-hearted hero is ordered to desert his devoted and generous wife. A far better typical line, conned by each generation in eager youth, to echo in the memory through the autumnal days, is:

"Sweet, perchance, some day will it seem e'en this to remember."

By many a haunting verse like this does the Roman poet steal into the innermost recesses of the human heart.

Of course his constant fame creates a presumption, at least, of supreme power. No ancient author was so widely known. Even in Juvenal's day the Æneid had become a well-thumbed text-book in Roman schools. It is asserted that if all his own MSS. had been lost, his chief works could have been restored from citations by others. Statius is perfectly sincere, as he sends his own proud masterpiece forth:

"O my Thebaid, wrought for twice six years without ceasing,
Live, I pray: nor yet draw nigh to the holy Æneid.
Follow her, rather, afar, and always worship her footprints."

To Dante, rising high above his own mediæval time, Homer, Aischylos, Pindar, Sophocles, and other Hellenes were still all but invisible. Yet, in any case, he might have chosen the court poet of the first and greatest Roman emperor to be his guide in all merely human wisdom or art. He may have been influenced, more than he knew, by his own political creed, which saw no escape from utter anarchy save in the revival of "Cæsar's" supremacy.

More impressive, to us, perhaps, than this tribute of Dante to Virgil, is Tennyson's greeting:

"Light among the vanished ages, star that gildest yet this phantom shore."

That ray of serene consolation should not be shut out from any appreciative soul. On the purely artistic side, again, it is worth the toil of learning the Latin speech, to verify another word of noble courtesy from the English Laureate, when he hails Virgil as:

"Wielder of the stateliest measure ever moulded by the lips of man."

In this among other ways Virgil is un-epic, that we constantly need the story of his own life to understand aright his work. It may be possible to trace the two together.

Publius Vergilius Maro was born of very humble parentage in Andes, a small village in the environs of Mantua. His father was a potter, or, as others say, a courier's hired servant, later married to his master's daughter, Magia. This name of his mother had doubtless much to do with the strange metamorphosis of Virgil in the Middle Ages, when his real career was quite forgotten, and he became, in numberless popular legends, a chief of Mages or sorcerers. Far more than in the case of Catullus, whose family enjoyed wealth and social rank in Verona, is it probable that the poet was of native Keltic stock. The valley of

the Po was still a semi-foreign province, though the "Transpadanes" acquired the right of Roman citizenship, through Julius Cæsar, so long their governor, in the eventful year 49 B.C. Scholarly training seems to have been easily accessible among them, and to have been received with the fresh enthusiasm of an unjaded race. This Mantuan peasant, like Horace's freedman father, was eager, and in some way able, to give his brilliant son the best advantages.

Virgil's verse-making appears to have begun in very early boyhood. His first lines, preserved by his chief biographer, Suetonius, are an elegiac couplet on a famous outlaw:

"Under this mountain of stones is covered a robber, Ballista.
Safely by day or by night, traveller, fare on your way."

Unimportant as it seems, this is imitated so early as Ovid.

Next, at the age of sixteen, Virgil is credited with the "Gnat," a poem still extant. In 414 hexameters we are told how the bite of the insect, though repaid only by a fatal slap, awakens the cow-herd and saves him from a venomous serpent. The injured ghost of the gnat, again visiting by night the sleeping herdsman, gives a long account of the under-world. This poem, it need hardly be said, is tasteless enough in plot to be ascribed even to an ordinary boy of sixteen. In certain metrical features, however, notably the avoidance of elision, it shows a later stage of pedantic accuracy than the mature Virgil ever reached. It is probably not his, but certainly was ascribed to him very early. The Octavius to whom it was dedicated was doubtless the emperor. Perhaps these verses are to be connected with the legend that the poet and the prince were schoolmates in early boyhood.

Certainly, at the age of sixteen—when Octavian was only nine—Virgil was in Rome, studying rhetoric under

the best masters. About this time he transferred his allegiance to philosophy, and bade solemn but lingering farewell to verse; in affectionate verses, if they be indeed his:

> "Begone, O Muses, ay, begone: altho'
> Sweet Muses; for we will the truth confess,
> Sweet have ye been! And on my pages look
> Ye yet again; but modestly, nor oft."

His new master was a famous Epicurean, named Siron. This is just about the date of Lucretius's death, and the very year in which the rather slight allusion to that poet's work occurs in the letters of Cicero. It seems more than likely that the young Mantuan strove to attain to that serene disbelief as to the spiritual world, that lofty, care-free view of this life, which Lucretius promises to men through his own austere creed. The influence of the elder poet is clearly traceable in many passages, but the warmer imagination of Virgil brought him back, before the Sixth Æneid was composed, to a more spiritual mysticism, closely akin to Plato's.

54 B.C.

Cicero ad Quint. frat., iii., 11, 4.

Yet perhaps the haunting echo of agnostic doubt, at least, is heard in the famous passage Æneid, VI., 893–98, where Æneas and the Sibyl leave the under-world at last through the gate of ivory, by which unreal dreams come forth to men. Certainly there is something quite like envy in the passage, presently cited, which is generally understood as an allusion to Lucretius, who claimed to have trampled religion under foot. Yet we have seen that both Epicuros and Lucretius, while denying to the gods the creative or governing power, still professed belief in their immortal and changeless existence. Virgil, like nearly all men of creative imagination, clung to the hope of endless life for the human soul as well. The mysteries of creation and of Nature's laws, which Lucretius fancied his science

had fully solved, Virgil hardly dares hope that inspiration will ever reveal. The whole passage is so clearly illustrative of Virgil's early—and lasting—convictions, that we may properly cite it here as from his inner biography.

Georgics, ii., 458–94.

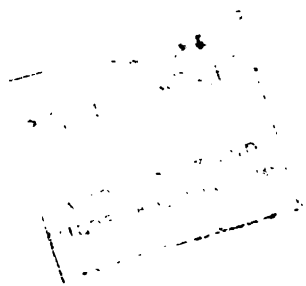
"Happy are they, beyond man's lot, if aware of the blessing,
Husbandmen, to whom, remote from clashing of armies,
Earth, repaying her debts, accordeth an easy existence.
. . . Dearest of all, it is true, unto *me* are the sweet-toned Muses.
Sacrifice unto them in eager devotion I offer.
May they, accepting it, teach me the paths of the stars in the heavens,
Luna's phases, the sun's diverse eclipses, and wherefore
Earth is shaken, or why the billows are fiercely uplifted.
Why do the wintry suns so hasten to dip in the ocean?
What is the power meantime that our wearisome nights is retarding?

Yet if it be not mine to attain to the secrets of Nature,
Since by the sluggish blood about my heart I am hindered,
Yet be the fields my delight, with the rivers that water the valleys;
Surely the streams I may love, and forests, forgetful of glory . . .
Blessed indeed is he who attaineth the sources of all things,
Whoso under his feet each mortal terror has trampled,
Even relentless Fate, with the roar of insatiate Hades.
Yet is he happy who winneth the rustic divinities' friendship:
Pan, and the sisterhood of the Nymphs, and the hoary Silvanus."

These tones are the sincerest in all Virgilian song. Some of the lines are actually repeated in the Æneid. He wavers between faith and doubt; he returns to simple and rural nature *for consolation.* Nothing could be more



MELPOMENE, VIRGIL, AND CLIO.
Hadrumetum mosaic at Susa, Tunisia.



modern, more like Clough's or Matthew Arnold's verse. As for the rude local gods whom he names, they but typify the familiar scenes themselves. Educated Romans, from Cicero down, were only more cautious than Lucretius, not more credulous. No serious enlightened man believed the Olympian myths, or their freely embroidered Latin equivalents. All large constructive faith was dead.

But this lover of rustic life, of the old simple ways and faiths of his own people, was early drawn into the service of the imperial court and dynasty, which considered the outworn Olympic theology, and especially, with it, the worship of the dead Julius and the living Augustus, as an eminently desirable and edifying belief: for the people. That the rather undignified and jocular Octavian, in his own familiar circle which included both the poets, failed to ridicule such pretensions for himself, few will believe. Even in a public reading at court, such fulsome passages as Aeneid, VI., 791–805, can hardly have been really agreeable to poet or patron. It is perhaps worth noting that Virgil actually ventures to intimate his disapproval of Julius's action in beginning the war with Pompey.

Æneid, vi., 824–35.
Æneid, viii., 670.
Dante, Purgatorio, i., 40–109.

"Thou, be the first to refrain, who derivest
thy race from Olympus!
Cast thou weapons out of thy hands."

Every such gleam of free speech is doubly welcome. A yet bolder half-line on Cato, making him judge in the under-world, is splendidly amplified by Dante.

However, not Virgil's sense of policy alone, but sincere gratitude also, bade him tune his courtly harp. After the decisive victory at Philippi the lands of the towns that had opposed the triumvirs were generally confiscated, to sate the rapacious and unruly soldiers of the legions. Virgil, early fatherless, had in some

42 B.C.

way acquired a small farm of his own near Cremona. From this he was ejected, with some danger even to his life. But Asinius Pollio, then governor of the district, with the poet Cornelius Gallus and the learned lawyer Alfenus Rufus, interested themselves warmly for him, and made him personally known even to the young Octavian, who was already master of Italy.

The exact final result is not clear. In the first Eclogue Virgil seems to be thanking Augustus for his restoration. Later we find him in the enjoyment of a Campanian estate, doubtless a gift, like Horace's Sabine farm. Furthermore, both poets appear to have had some domicile near Tarentum also, as well as at Rome itself. Mæcenas's precise share in Virgil's prosperity is disputed.

BUCOLICS

Of the ten poems known as Bucolics or Eclogues some had doubtless already appeared singly. These are the earliest unquestioned Virgilian works. This group, indicated by the title as a selection, was evidently arranged by Virgil in the present order, and was issued about the year 39 B.C. Each is brief, the longest 111 verses, and all are in hexameters.

These poems are nearly all, in form, dialogues, or songs, of shepherds. The debt to Theocritos is great, and openly avowed, many lines being more or less perfect translations. With the accurate Sicilian scenery of the Greek poet are mingled many touches true only of northern Italy. But this is the least of the incongruities. The names of his great Roman friends, political references, adulation of the Emperor, are mingled with the chatter of the clowns. Recondite mystical allusions, mythical touches, and over all the witchery of a dreamy, languorous style, made this indeed a novelty in literature.

The various elements, and their reluctant fusion, may be seen especially in the tenth Eclogue. The Roman soldier-poet Gallus is its centre. His jilting by some fickle lady is made more prominent than most lovers would desire. He is descried lying under a lonely rock *in Arcadia*, while even the mountain-peaks drop tears for him, and Pan, Silvanus, and Apollo come to console him. Doubtless this Apollo is the poets' overlord, in the Arcadia of romance or dreamland. Yet the vines trained over willow-trees make a distinctly Lombardesque touch. Gallus himself utters exactly half of the 77 verses, and finally decides that Love can neither be resisted nor beguiled.

"Amor conquereth all; let us too yield unto Amor."

Yet the poem is all Virgil's. The beginning and close even mark in conventional phrases its position as last of the Bucolics. It is a tangled web of absurdities. Many of the best touches are suggested by Theocritos, in whose pastorals they were far more truthful bits of local color. Yet even here no one can doubt that a poet, however bewildered in his own mazy fancies, is singing sweetly.

The dead Daphnis, of whom both shepherds chant praises in the Fifth Eclogue, can hardly be other than Julius Cæsar. He is already on the threshold of Olympus, is worshipped on an equality with Apollo, is the good Genius of the peaceful time just beginning. The very mountains and hills cry aloud in his praise, the forests raise the song:

"A god, a god is he!"

The most lofty and famous of all, however, is the Fourth Eclogue, uttered in the poet's own person, yet in Theocritean tones still.

"Now let us sing on a loftier theme, ye Sicilian Muses."

In Pollio's consulship is to be born a child that shall indeed bring back the age of gold. As he grows, venomous herbs shall perish, the serpent shall die. The plough, the harrow, and the pruning-hook will be needed no more. It is not strange that men long fancied these verses were echoes of Isaiah's language, or even a directly inspired prophecy of the Messiah. Such notions are long since abandoned. The child so eagerly expected must have been the fruit either of Octavian's or Antony's recent marriage. If, as is likely, it was Augustus's infamous daughter Julia, the prophet was blind indeed.

40 B.C.

These ten pastorals, eight hundred and thirty verses in all, made the poet famous. The voice of praise was loud and enthusiastic from the first. Shy Virgil in the Roman streets was beset by admiring crowds, and once at least overwhelmed with a general ovation in the theatre. Perhaps parody is the final evidence of wide-spread fame, and this also began at once. Some examples that are reported seem but banter and fun, as when a mere inserted stop before a final word changes

"Fresh milk neither in summer nor yet in winter is lacking,"

to

"Fresh milk neither in summer nor yet in winter! 'tis lacking."

Perhaps the provincial poet was seriously accused of false or faulty Latin. Thus in the familiar opening line:

"Tityrus, you as you lie by the wide-spreading beech-tree are covered,"

the use of *tegmine* seems sharply attacked in

"Tityrus, why, if your toga be warm, such a coverlet also?"

GEORGICS

The Georgics, in four books, two thousand one hundred and eighty hexameters, constitute a far more sustained task. The story that they occupied Virgil seven years would make him complete less than one verse each day. They do, however, reveal the utmost care and polish. Not later than the year 29 B.C. these books were complete, and were read aloud by Mæcenas and Virgil to Augustus "in a continuous four days session," says Suetonius, though so many hours would more than suffice for the mere reading, without discussion.

36–29 B.C. (?)

The work seems to have been requested, or even ordered, by Mæcenas. A serious attempt to revive the neglected agriculture of Italy it can hardly have been considered, by either of them. Indeed, Virgil frankly indicates his desire to "bestow honor upon an *ignoble* theme." The need of such a revival had been realized since the time of the Gracchi, at least. Cato's book has been mentioned, and also Varro's treatise in dialogue-form, which was composed in 36 B.C., so may have sprung from the same suggestion that produced the Georgics.

Virgil nominally takes Hesiod as his guide, yet he gives us far less plain, practical advice than did the old Bœotian peasant. As Hesiod managed to include accounts of Prometheus, Pandora, the five Ages, so Virgil more than rivals him by world-wide digression in quest of nobler poetic fields. The weather signs in Book I. are largely drawn from the Greek Aratos's Prognostics: yet even here Virgil is far more anxious to please and surprise as a poet than to teach practical meteorology.

With all this, in a poem, certainly no one will quarrel: and even he who reads for didactic uses may actually learn something of grain culture from Book I., more from Book II. as to trees and grape-vines. Book III., on the breed-

ing and care of domestic animals, is less suitable for scholastic use. The long and rather arrogant prologue foreshadows a great epic on Augustus's military exploits, a promise of which the Æneid is to some extent a fulfilment.

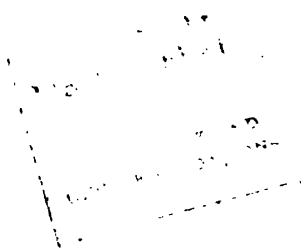
Lastly, Book IV. is devoted to bees. This section, however, is affected by a tradition most injurious to Virgil's repute for loyalty and courage. The great commentator Servius remarks, on the Tenth Eclogue, that the latter half of the Fourth Georgic also, as first published, was entirely taken up with Gallus's praises. In 27 B.C. Gallus incurred the ill-will of Augustus, was exiled, and ended his own life by falling upon his sword. Imperial revenge pursued him still. Virgil consented to remove this laudatory passage, and substituted for it the long account of Thessalian Aristæus, and his device for securing bees, doubtless also the interwoven episode on Orpheus and Eurydice. The story seems to be authentic, and Augustus's success in suppressing the earlier edition has proved complete.

Most classical scholars would agree upon the Georgics as the most perfect and artistic poem in all Latin literature. The material is one in which Virgil's lack of dramatic and constructive force is felt as little as possible. Indeed, the subject is so flexible, the general method is so discursive, that any digression can be and is gracefully justified, or even half-concealed. Probably many lyric flights of early years, many long-hoarded musical phrases or fancies, are here imbedded in the mosaic pattern.

The display of Alexandrian erudition, the allusions to obscure Hellenic names or legends, may better please the learned historian or mythologist than the mere lover of pure art and beauty. We must always remember, however, that real classic mythology is nearly all of Greek origin, that plagiarism then bore no stigma, that indeed



GEORGICS, IV., 118–124, AND ILLUSTRATION.
From a Virgil manuscript in the Vatican.



these very allusions are often the only possible acknowledgment of Virgil's debt to his masters. Finally, he who enjoys only purely creative genius, or communion with nature in her elemental forms, will find little indeed to satisfy him in the Latin poets—save only Lucretius.

ÆNEID

It was doubtless by imperial command, in some form or other, that the poet spent his last eleven years on his national epic. Not Augustus, and not Æneas, is the protagonist in this largest and most ambitious work of Virgil. Rather in the long rolling hexameter measure, repeated almost ten thousand times, we seem to hear the resistless tread of a tireless folk, pushing on through the changing centuries to the overlordship of Latium, of the peninsula, of the wide Mediterranean world. Though the poet's tenderest love is always for far-away Lombardy, though he detests the imperial city where the clients throng at dawn at the patron's haughty palace-gates, yet in his national pride he too is a Roman. The most famous utterance of this feeling, in Virgilian or any other Latin verse, has already been cited. It is the culmination of the passage in the Sixth Book, where a procession of heroes, his unborn Roman descendants—an array longer far than the line of Banquo's crowned children—passes before Aeneas's astonished eyes.

Supra, p. 5.

Again, when the magic shield is created by Vulcan, the imitative artist improves in one respect upon the Iliad, by drawing the carven scenes from the later events of Italian history. Here not merely ancient legends, but Cleopatra, Augustus, even mere mortals still living, like Agrippa, are included. In these historical passages Ennius was doubtless Virgil's most dangerous rival.

Æneid, viii., 626-728.

It was not strange that early Roman chroniclers, or Greek flatterers, seized upon the Homeric Æneas as the best available link between the old mythic cycle and the rather rude and prosaic Roman annals. The Trojan race, though deservedly punished for upholding Paris's crime, had long enjoyed the highest favor, and still retained the love, of Zeus and other gods. A passage in the Iliad makes a hostile divinity, Poseidon the sea-lord, announce Æneas as the future ruler and parent of rulers over the Trojan people. There is no hint of a migration. Even if this be an interpolation, that particular Homerid, at least, was apparently singing to please an Asiatic monarch's ear, who claimed descent from Aphrodite's beloved son.

A fragment from a lost play of Sophocles depicts Æneas, with child and sire, in the familiar group, setting forth into exile, we know not whither. A Sicilian poet, Stesichoros, brought him on a westward voyage to his own lovely island. The junction with the Romulus-myth was at first made awkwardly, by assigning the eponymous founder to Æneas as son or grandson. Soon, however, the gap of over four centuries between Troy's fall and Rome's origin, according to the received chronology, made requisite the long, shadowy line of Alban kings between Æneas and Romulus.

This needed stop-gap is cleverly utilized by our poet in Zeus's opening prophecy. Æneas is to rule but three years, Ascanius thirty, his Alban successors three hundred, while as to the Romans, says the king of the gods:

> "Neither a limit in time nor yet of power I assign them:
> Empire endless I grant."

Such passages helped to associate Virgil with the undying reverence for Rome in mediæval times. Dante clearly regards him as a prophet of the papacy and its spiritual supremacy.

The weakest link in the chain is the connection of

Cæsar with the sacred line. Æneas's son Ascanius, says Virgil, coming from Troy, or Ilium, would naturally be called *Ilus*, the Ilian. What more natural than the softer form *Iulus*, from which, finally, the adjective *Iulius* is self-evidently derived. A mercenary herald's college, inventing Norman ancestry for a millionnaire parvenu, could hardly be more ingenious.

It is well known that Virgil wished his unfinished Æneid to be destroyed. This would doubtless have been almost impossible. Copies of large portions, at least, must have been in various hands. The work appears to be essentially complete, and certainly is preserved in an incomparably more perfect state than Lucretius's treatise. The brother-poets who published it did not even venture to piece out the rather frequent half-lines, which are the clearest evidence that the final touches were never given. Minor discrepancies exist, as in every human labor so extensive and detailed. Yet the story begun is fairly finished.

Even the sudden close, at the death of Æneas's rival in love and war, may be itself a strong piece of constructive criticism. Many students hold that the original Iliad, or Achilleid, ended, and wisely ended, where Hector pants out his life at Achilles's feet. Possibly Virgil agreed with them.

The real consummation has occurred just before the duel of Turnus and Æneas, when Jupiter bids Juno abandon the lost cause, and she makes reluctant but whole-hearted submission. The only boon she demands, and receives, is that the *name* of the Trojans, so long hateful to her, shall be effaced. These divine sky-drawn figures are certainly large, dignified, stately, and if they be somewhat dim, and wavering in outline, we must remember that their poetic creator is upborne by no enthusiastic living faith, among his hearers or in his own heart. At least

the full tones of national pride resound once again in their words. Juno makes the request:

"Still let Latium abide, and the kings for ages in Alba.
Call them not Teucrians now, nor named with the name of the Trojans,
Fallen is Troy; and fallen alike be the name with the nation. . . ."

And Jupiter answers:

"Surely the Latian name shall abide, and the Teucrians only
Merge in the race they join. Both manners and rites will I give them.
So shall a people arise, with the blood of Ausonia mingled,
High in piety over men, or even immortals.
Never another race like them shall honor thy altars."

We certainly do not love and cherish Virgil, however, chiefly for these full-mouthed utterances of national feeling, nor do we believe later antiquity did. It is easy to credit the tradition that he wrote out his entire plot, rapidly, in prose, and then elaborated each book or lesser episode as the spirit moved. Many a minor episode, like Palinurus's death, is as complete as an Horatian ode, and often irreconcilable in detail with a passage of some other book.

Æneid, v, 833-63; vi., 337-62.

The choice of Books II., IV., and VI., for the great reading at court was well-advised. It is to be noted that all three deal with incidents previous to Æneas's first arrival in Latium. Each is, in fact, a great episode. In neither is the hero the chief object of interest.

The loss of the Greek epic cycle, largely an appendix to the Iliad, leaves Virgil's second book our chief ancient picture of Troy's downfall, and cuts off intelligent judgment as to its essential originality in detail. The panorama of disaster is here most effectively unrolled. Priam

is the figure most firmly stamped on the memory. Curiously enough, a line describing his "headless trunk that lies upon the shore"—whereas he had simply been killed by a sword-thrust in his own court-yard—seems to hint that the poet was distracted by the relatively recent death of Pompey: a character whose fate leaves us cold, but appealed mightily to his own generation.

Æneid, ii., 557-58.

The reader is expected to realize, that whatever sin Troy had committed has been fully atoned. The chief culprit, Paris, was already dead, and his very name is rather conspicuous for its absence from the poem. A rival, indeed, once applies it in bitter scorn to Æneas, as an Asiatic interloper who carries off another's bride. No doubt Paris was the least agreeable of ancestral kinsmen to Roman pride.

Æneid, iv., 215-17.

This question may be connected with the chief problem of literary criticism in the second book. A vivid and powerful passage, in which Helen appears, is missing from some MSS., and is bracketed by many editors. The discussion as to its genuineness is at least as old as Suetonius. Perhaps Virgil himself remained in doubt whether Helen should be made prominent at all. This, again, is part of the large and difficult question, how Roman tradition ever came to accept a close and filial relation with a city which had been destroyed by the righteous doom of the gods, for a sin against the fundamental law of the family and the sacred rights of hospitality.

Æneid, ii., 567-88.

The unhappy love and tragic death of Queen Dido owes much to Apollonios Rhodios's account of Medea's passion, but is a masterpiece in itself. The purpose of the episode seems to be to discover, in this conjugal love turned to bitterness, the source of the long hatred between the two races. It is needless to raise historical difficulties over Car-

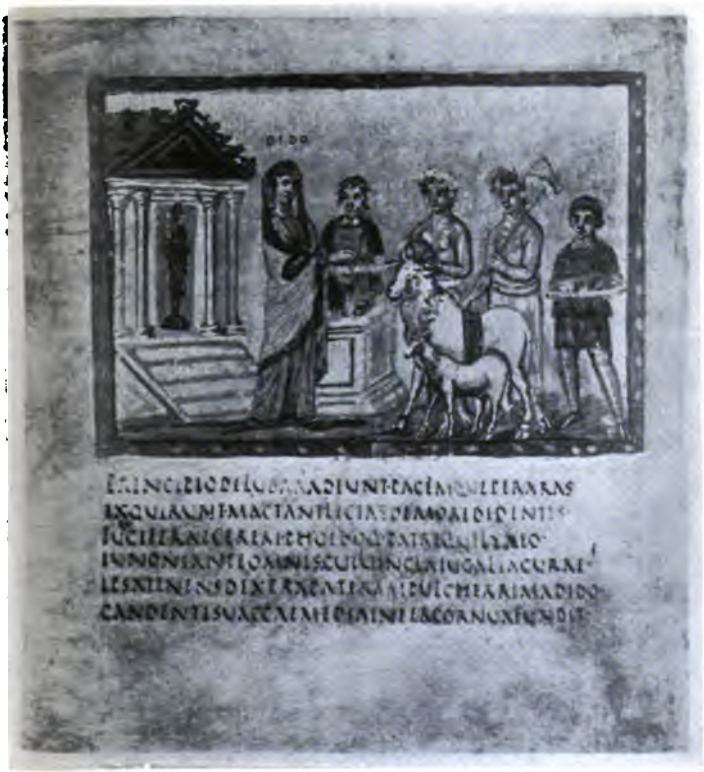
thaginian Dido's union with Trojan Æneas—though they should be set some centuries apart—if the dramatic effect be attained. Certainly the prophetic allusion to Hamilcar and Hannibal is thrilling, even to us.

"Never between our races, I pray, be love or alliance.
May thou arise from my bones, unknown avenger, hereafter,
Ever with sword and fire to pursue the Dardanian settlers!
Soon, or in after days, whenever the power is accorded.
Shores be arrayed 'gainst shores; may the waves still strive with the waters;
Army with army contend, both they and the sons of their offspring!"

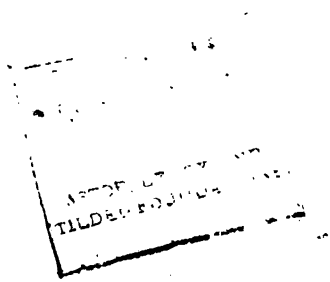
The whole treatment of Dido, and our feeling for her, reveal the great change made by Christianity, by chivalry, by modern humanity, in the attitude toward woman. Doubtless the Roman listener was pleased to see the Punic queen flouted and deserted. But an artist must be superior to the brutal instincts of his folk. Homer could have taught him a more chivalric courtesy. Surely, the Homeric Hector who loved Andromache so truly, and had uttered only words of kindness even to Helen, would have scorned this cold-hearted kinsman.

The visit to the under-world is on the whole the culmination of the poem. The belief in reincarnation is not clearly reconciled with the fixed doom of many, both the good and the evil, in Hades. The future Romans shown to Æneas, also, are not mere phantoms, but real souls. Yet they too are withdrawn from the perpetual cycle of purification, life, and death. They must wait idly for many centuries, it would seem, in the sequestered shade where Anchises reviews them. In general, the poet has little of Dante's accuracy and consistency of delineation. One cannot plot out his under-world at all. But the larger ether, the dim-lit majesty of his un-

Æneid, VI. 680



ÆNEID, IV., 56-61, AND ILLUSTRATION.
From a Virgil manuscript in the Vatican.



earthly realm, give it an ideal beauty more like Plato's great mythic pictures in the "Phaidros," or at the close of the "Republic," than anything else of Roman creation. Yet its culmination in the passage on the boy Marcellus, graceful and pathetic as it is, must be considered a digression from epic propriety into courtly adulation.

The comparative neglect of the last six books by modern students is inevitable. The battle scenes, even in the Iliad, are by no means favorites, and a suspicion of their unreality often creeps over the reader. Virgil, certainly, was unfamiliar with martial strife in any form, and remote indeed from duels between talkative champions who dash about in chariots. The visible entrance of the gods upon these scenes of carnage is, in an Augustan age, not merely incredible, but shocks us as irreverent.

In general, the poet's own zeal and energy are not fully maintained. His sympathies seem often on the side of Turnus and his Italians, who fight against the foreign invader. Still, the last adventures and generous death of Nisus and Euryalus form a touching episode. Often, again, the poet's thoughts stray to calmer scenes. The rustic luxury of Arcadian Evander's seat of power, where later Rome was to stand, is lovingly detailed.

An original figure is the maiden warrior Camilla: unless the Amazon queen Penthesilea, in the Greek epic cycle, was her lost prototype. This young martyr of Italian freedom, as Dante seems to have regarded her, is the first Virgilian character mentioned in the Commedia, whose author knew the whole Æneid by heart. In the sketch of her childhood the gentle poet reverts gladly to his own boyish memories. And to the Georgics, even to some shining verses in the bewildering Eclogues, the truest lovers of Virgil may well return: to rustic scenes, and unambitious strains.

Many sides of Virgilian study must here be left untouched. He was a most learned poet, in the Alexandrian sense. All earlier Greek and Roman literature, philosophy, mythic lore, was at his command. His allusiveness is much like Milton's, save that his acquaintance with the Hebrew prophets is not clearly proven. The amount of his open borrowing, of literal translation, from Homer and others, is astonishing. The lines of Ennius which are extant, are largely those quoted by Macrobius to convict Virgil of plagiarism. If we had the entire literature that was accessible in the Augustan age, nearly every Virgilian verse might appear a translation or an echo. Yet nearly all he borrows becomes his own by royal right of graceful fitness in use. Even as the expression, in epic verse, of the most imperious and martial of races, his Æneid must always retain its historic prominence, despite the general feeling, that his was the heavy burden of an honor unto which he was not born.

THE "APPENDIX."

Allusion has been made to some of the poems in the "Virgilian Appendix," ascribed by Suetonius and others to the poet's early youth, even to his sixteenth year. The "Culex" or Gnat seems to be not the work of a gifted, dreamy boy, but of a clever though tasteless pedant, who meant to claim for it Virgilian authorship. The appeal to Octavius as "holy child," and the prophecy

> "Later in graver tones my learned Muse shall address thee,"

could hardly have been uttered by Virgil in 54 B.C., five years before Octavius's great-uncle became dictator, ten years before the boy took his kinsman's name or heritage. It is a clever but transparent invention, after Augustus's elevation to the highest place, and after Virgil had become

a court poet. It is not Virgil's, because he could not then have done it so badly.

The "Ætna," in 646 hexameters, is a scientific essay on the origin and nature of volcanic outbreaks. The last forty lines have a more human interest, describing an act of filial heroism and miraculous escape in the time of a great eruption. The poem is a century later than Virgil, remote from him in tone, and apparently influenced by scientific essays of Seneca. The subject, and the bad condition of the text, make it of minor literary value.

The "Ciris" tells the tragic story of Scylla, princess of Megara, who, having fallen in love with the invader Minos, betrays her father. Minos wins the town, but punishes the traitress. She is sent out to sea, lashed in a boat, and eventually is transformed into a sea-bird, to be forever pursued by her father in an eagle's guise. The myth was known to Virgil, indeed the last four of the 541 lines are taken bodily from the First Georgic. The poem is full of neat plagiarisms from Virgil and Catullus. It is one of many evidences that clever versifying was a general accomplishment under the early emperors.

The "Diræ" is a poem of 183 hexameters, the last eighty of which are better regarded as a separate composition, usually entitled by modern editors "Lydia." The poet has been deprived of his estate by a rude soldier: hence, no doubt, the ascription of the verses to Virgil. As Catullus's friend Valerius Cato had a similar mishap, and also is known to have sung the praises of a beloved Lydia, this work is often attributed to him. The style, and the circumstances, are clearly not Virgilian; but the events described seem to be those of the year 41 B.C., in which Virgil's farm also was confiscated.

Cf. supra, p. 123

The other poems in the Appendix are brief, and of minor importance. One in iambic verse is cited by Suetonius, and

is quoted here on a previous page as probably genuine. Another is a parody on Catullus's famous dedication of his yacht. Other traces of the same poet's influence are to be seen in these slight experiments, as would be naturally expected. The metres, also, are varied. They may very well be in part boyish exercises of Virgil.

Supra, p. 159

Not until the Middle Ages was the "Moretum," or Rustic Breakfast, ascribed to our poet. It is not at all in his style, but probably of the Augustan age. The little poem of 124 hexameters is full of homely description as accurate as a Dutch painting. In some parts it reminds us of Ovid's "Philemon and Baucis," but without the playfulness of that rather frivolous poet. The picture is well worth studying for its own sake.

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The best English edition of Virgil is by Conington, in three volumes of the "Bibliotheca Classica." Nettleship's more laborious scholarship has increased the value of the latest revision. The poems of the Appendix, and the "Moretum," are to be found in Bährens's "Poetæ Latini Minores." They are there atrociously edited, but the true text can be restored from the foot-notes. Professor Nettleship also published the Latin Lives of Virgil, with a useful essay. The great Latin commentary by Servius has often a literary quality of its own. In Macrobius is much discussion of Virgil's style, notably on his "plagiarism," with long lists of parallel passages.

Conington's free prose rendering of all the works is valuable. His rhymed Æneid in the galloping metres of Scott, William Morris's in fourteen-syllable couplets, and Dryden's in heroics, are all too swift and noisy to represent the original music. Sir Charles Bowen's version is also rhymed, is faithful, tasteful, and spirited. His line lacks only the final syllable of the hexameter. Professor Tyrrell in a special appendix discusses the various Virgilian translators most interestingly. A delightful rendering of the Georgics, all too little known, is Miss Harriet Waters Preston's, in an irregular verse of five accents and varying rhyme.

Sellar's volume on Virgil is the fullest in English. Some readers find it soporific. In French we may mention especially Boissier's delightful volume, and Sainte-Beuve's early work. Here as everywhere Ribbeck's "Geschichte der Römischen Dichtung" is of importance.

The writer has printed two previous briefer studies on Virgil: in the Warner Library, and in the Chautauquan for April, 1898. The most famous essay, by Myers, is rather a rhapsody. Professor Mackail's treatment of the poet is more reverent than the present one, yet he agrees that the three chief elements in the Æneid, Homeric tradition, Roman patriotism, and Pantheistic philosophy, could not be perfectly fused.

Comparetti's "Virgil in the Middle Ages" opens one of the most curious chapters in the history of superstition. The early pictorial illustrations in the Vatican manuscript have recently been reproduced.

CHAPTER XXII

LIVY

MORE fitly than any poet may this author be set beside Virgil. Above all other Latin compositions the "Æneis" and the "Annales" are fit for virginal and boyish ears. These are the two great patriotic pictures of the Roman past. Neither artist is fettered by any sense of painful historical truth, nor yet gifted with the largest creative imagination. The highest charm of each is what we call style, or perfect taste, exerted by both upon a mosaic of ideas and materials mainly borrowed. Yet they have put their individual and national stamp upon their task. This is typical of the best Roman writing generally.

59 B.C.–17 A.D.

Titus Livius also like Catullus, Nepos, and Virgil, came from Lombardy. His native city, Padua, had the highest repute for morality among all Italian towns. He was just too young to fight, as did his people generally, against the triumvirs. To Padua he returned at last to die. Yet his career seems to have been chiefly in the city itself, which he knows perfectly. There is no reason to suppose him to have been a kinsman to the great house of the Livii, into which Augustus married, nor indeed a Latin at all. His pure gift, like Virgil's, is quite as likely to have come from an alien stock.

43 B.C.

We hear of a rhetorical manual addressed to his son, and also of philosophical essays, some of them in popular style and dialogue form. The essays were copiously illustrated with historical material. Still, Livy's fame must always

Quintilian, 10, 1., 39.
Seneca, Epist. 100, 9.

have rested upon a single essay, his monumental Roman History.

His discontent at the loss of liberty is hardly veiled. He speaks despairingly of his own time "in which we can endure neither our own faults nor the remedies." One chief consolation in his absorbing task is to be meantime withdrawn "from the view of the evils which the state has for many years beheld." Despite personal friendship and regard for "Augustus Cæsar, the restorer and founder of every shrine," Livy shows no hopefulness as to any better time to come. The emperor seems to have admired and liked the manly, frank, unpartisan author, whom he stigmatized as a "Pompeian." Livy even ventured to doubt whether the career of Julius the dictator had been on the whole a blessing or a curse.

Prologue, § 9.

Ibid., § 5.

iv., 20, 7.

Tacitus, Annals, iv., 34.

Seneca, Nat. Quæst., v., 18, 4.

His one hundred and forty-two books brought the story from Æneas and Romulus down to the death of Augustus's step-son Drusus, in 9 B.C. A passage of Book I., mentioning two, not three, occasions when Rome was free from war and the temple of Janus closed, proves that he is writing not later than 26 B.C. The grouping of books in decades seems to be given up in the later portions, so the total number need not indicate a failure to complete an appointed task. Yet the author, who survived Augustus by three years, may naturally have endeavored to bring his work down to that emperor's death.

The undertaking, though large, was not so enormous as Martial indicates in his epigram on the early abridged edition.

"Here into scanty parchment is monstrous Livy rolled,
He whom by no means when entire my library would hold."

In number of words, as in general scope, the essay coincided

very closely with Charles Knight's history of England, which also gives an account of about eight centuries, and traces the growth of an empire quite as vast as Rome's.

It may well be that Livy's account of his own and recent times, if extant, would entitle him to rank among real *historians, i.e.*, investigators and expositors of exact truth as to the events of the past. Of the entire work, however, only a quarter remains, Books I.–X., XXL–XLV., with a few fragments, and a very brief ancient epitome of the lost books. This list of contents is itself often our sole resource. The recovery of the missing rolls has been the favorite dream of scholars and romancers, but is now hardly to be hoped for.

At the arts, literature, social life of his people Livy affords only chance glimpses. Of military tactics, civic institutions, and law, even of his own day, he has barely a layman's knowledge. Of the Alpine passes through which he describes Hannibal as descending, even of such famous and accessible battle-fields as the Caudine Forks or Cannæ, he claims, and reveals, no knowledge whatever. Yet even these are not his gravest defects.

Scanty as are, and were, the data for a serious study of early Rome, he does not appear to have seriously sought and systematically used even these. The laws of the kings, the annals of the pontiffs, the "Origines" of Cato, are but occasionally and carelessly cited. Sources, no doubt, of a very different quality, he had in abundance: the books of recent predecessors quite as uncritical as himself, purely poetical fictions of Nævius, Ennius, and possibly older balladists, and the funeral eulogies which even he knew to be utterly regardless of truth. If he compared these sources, it was merely to seek at each turn the most interesting version, the most stimulating suggestion. Though he conforms in the main to a hampering usage in giving a separate chronicle of each year,

Livy, viii., 40.

the work is a rhetorical study, whose single aim is to intensify our admiration for the old Roman patriotism, self-sacrifice, and heroic qualities generally.

Nearly all his predecessors have vanished, leaving him master of the field. This is quite true of his first decade, closing with the year 293 B.C. Through the better-known period from Hannibal's rise to the fall of Macedonian Perseus, treated in twenty-five extant books, Polybios's more sober and laborious narrative often runs beside Livy's: and though far less readable, is of superior authority.

219–167 B.C.

It is partly the chance of survival that makes Hannibal's career the chief episode in Livy's story, and invites comparison with Herodotos's account of Xerxes's invasion. The general similarity in genius and position of these two writers has already been intimated. Direct imitations of the elder by the younger author can probably be pointed out. Both should be first read, and enjoyed, by the young, in extracts and episodes, as delightful story-tellers, without too constant effort to extract accurate truth from their glowing pages.

E.g., Livy, I., 54.

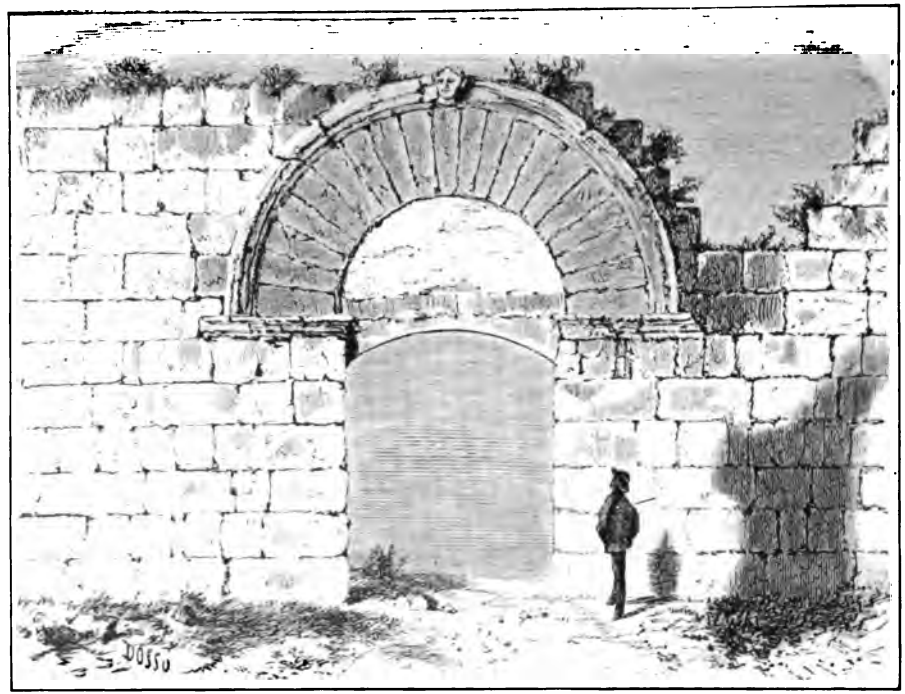
Indeed, the shortcomings of Livy, as seen by the critical modern historian, heighten his charm as an imaginative and creative author: as a great *Dichter*. He is evidently in love with his task, and wins for himself, as well as for his heroes, hearty affection and admiration. The feature in which he excels nearly all other historical writers is in the speeches, usually, no doubt, wholly his own creation. They are excellent character-studies, and they also set forth masterfully the larger features of Roman story, of the steady march to world-wide dominion. It is needless, then, to combat Macaulay's assertion that "no historian has shown so complete an indifference to truth," though we must smile at Dante's "Livy that erreth not." In his first ten books, especially, Livy set forth all the authentic annal-

istic truth that presented itself to him, which was very little, and whatever fond tradition and his own imagination could supply: which was much.

There is no real disguise as to all this. Thus at the beginning of Book VI. he confesses that he has had practically no real data thus far, the few records ever made having perished completely when Rome was sacked by the Gauls. Yet many of the most thrilling incidents, dramatic dialogues, elaborate speeches, had already been set down. The destruction of Alba Longa, the murder of Servius Tullius by his daughter, the expulsion of the Tarquins, the kingly legends generally, are hardly read now as history by anyone. The keeping of the bridge by Horatius against Porsena and Tarquin, the winning of his honored name Scævola, "the Left-handed," by Mucius, most magnificent of assassins, the terrible justice of Brutus inflicted on his own sons, seem clearly no less poetic in quality: hence their preservation, and their popularity.

Appius Claudius and his decemvirs are real men. Their date is approximately fixed. Such deeds as Virginius's may occur wherever lawless tyrants are defied by despairing fathers and lovers: but many details of Livy's story are as clearly imaginative as a scene of "Lorna Doone."

Last and grandest in this elder line of heroes looms Camillus, at the close of Book X. Yet the very outlines of his romantic life are probably fabulous. That Brennus and his Gauls retired, after the sack, at their leisure, and of their own free-will, is more than probable. Indeed, some details of this Roman career show more effort to please the reader's fancy than to convince him of their truth. Especially diverting is the schoolmaster of Falerii, who treacherously leads his noble pupils into Camillus's beleaguering camp. The chivalric Roman furnished the lads with rods, and bids them flog the pedagogue back to the town. The prompt voluntary surrender of Falerii, as a responsive



ANCIENT GATE OF THE CITADEL OF FALERII.

From a woodcut in Duruy's History of Rome.

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courtesy, Livy may have found in his original; but the neat sermon to the culprit is true Livian rhetoric and antithesis:

"Not to a people nor a commander like thyself hast thou come, oh wicked man, with thy wicked offer. Between us and the men of Falerii is no bond formed by human compact: but that which Nature created exists and shall abide. There are laws of war no less than of peace, and these we have been taught to observe with justice as well as valor. We bear no arms against childhood, to which mercy is shown even in captured cities, but against armed men, who, nowise wronged nor assailed by us, attacked the Roman camp before Veii. Even them, so far as in thee lay, thou hast surpassed by wickedness unheard of. But I will conquer here, as at Veii, by Roman arts alone: by valor, energy, deeds of arms."

Such assertions of Roman fair play, which we are assured is as proverbial as "Punic faith," *i.e.*, Carthaginian treachery, will arouse many modern echoes. In truth, the claim grows at times monotonous, like the thrice-repeated self-sacrifice of a Decius Mus, to save a victory prophesied for the host whose commander shall be slain. Livy has at least too much sense of literary balance not to give the other side a hearing. Thus when a Roman army was released, humiliated indeed but unhurt, from the great trap in the Caudine valley, the consul who had made the treaty bade the senate repudiate it. Nay, he returned, without his men, to the fatal pass, declared that his ignoble surrender made him now himself a Samnite, smote the Roman herald, and bade his former people take up this new injury and carry the war to a glorious end. Then the gallant and too chivalric Samnite Pontius cries out in noble scorn:

"Will you always find a pretext for repudiating the pledges made in defeat? You gave hostages to Porsena:

and by stealth withdrew them. With gold you redeemed your city from the Gauls: they were cut down in the act of receiving it. You pledged us peace, to regain your legions: that peace you now cancel. Always you cover deception with some fair mask of justice."

Like Virgil when describing Turnus or Camilla, Livy always remembers that Pontius and his brave people were Italians, as he is himself. From the opening words of this ninth book the Samnite chieftain is treated by Livy with somewhat such chastened pride as a modern British historian shows in his recollection that Washington was of pure English stock. In the curt epitome of Book XI. we read that thirty years later "C. Pontius, commander of the Samnites, was led in a triumphal procession—and decapitated." One would gladly hear Livy's comments on that example of Roman gratitude, which Niebuhr calls the greatest stain on all their annals.

Often Livy provides the materials for correcting his own too sweeping or prejudiced assertions. Thus, like his people generally, he insists on the "perfidy" of Hannibal. Yet in the long campaigns that fill the third decade we see at least as much chivalric generosity on the Carthaginian's part as is shown by his opponents. In truth, the terror and hatred Hannibal inspired could not conceal, even from the Romans, a genius and an intrepid character superior to their own. In such cases it is often gratifying to see how fair-minded Livy is, as it were, in spite of himself. It was, moreover, impossible to tell the tale at all without revealing the wonderful control exercised by Hannibal's tact and indomitable will over savage men of a hundred hostile clans and races.

Few men read Livy through with unflagging interest, in Latin or in English. A certain sameness in the general type even of his best episodes grows monotonous at last.

But he is a master, perhaps on the whole the master, of easy, rather colloquial Latin prose. As a story-teller he has at most but one Roman master, the poet Ovid. In moral purity he has no superior whatever. If the present chapter seems relatively brief, it is because any good history of Rome, on whatever scale, must be largely made up of passages more or less perfectly transferred from Livy's storied page. He is therefore well known to every classical student, and has always exercised great influence on historical narration.

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The only available annotated edition of Livy entire is Weissenborn's, with German notes. The Bohn translation is tolerably accurate. Books XXI.–XXV. are excellently rendered by Church and Brodribb in the Macmillan series, uniform with their Tacitus. The authority of Livy as an historian of early Rome was rudely shattered by Niebuhr. Of late Lanciani and others have to some extent returned to acceptance of his statements, even as to the age of the kings.

CHAPTER XXIII

HORACE

FAR more than any other Latin poet, indeed, all but alone among Romans, Virgil is the idealist. By chance of birth Horace is his twin-star. There is rather slight but adequate evidence of cordial friendship between them. It was the dreamer, even, who introduced the poor satirist and lampooner to the greatest of patrons. But of any such real artistic communion as Goethe's with Schiller there is no hint: nor could it be readily believed.

65 B.C.–8 B.C.

Horace is always wide awake, and has a shrewd eye for his own earthly interests. Reticence, and good taste, he learned, rather late in life, with the help of luxurious patronage. But all his work is done in cool blood. He deprecates enthusiasm, and laughs at his own brief flights. He holds, and will retain, a broad and goodly estate, but not in Arcadia. It has no lofty heights like the Promethean cliff, nor yawning caverns of mystery like the Virgilian under-world. So far is he from being dramatic, that we can hardly cite one well-told story in all he has left us. His own life, within and without, lies fully revealed before us, delineated with a frank self-satisfaction that makes him the little friend and neighbor of all sensible, practical mankind.

Horace remains still, as he has been for most of these nineteen centuries, the most quotable and quoted of authors. That is, his sententious phrases are the small change, the current coin, of worldly wit, of courtly com-

pliment, of universal experience. Even when carven in unforgettable form, they are commonplaces still. Hence they blend perfectly into the style of any modern satirist whose mellow wisdom we enjoy. We should miss the allusion to Black Care, as she sits behind the hurrying horseman, from many a chapter of Thackeray: yet it is, after all, as much a truism as the Arab's figure of death: "the black camel that kneels at every man's gate."

Most of Horace's work is best read, and cited, in bits, as the spice, not the real bread, of life. Perused in the mass it gives us an ever-growing and painful sense of spiritual limitation, of life's narrow and narrowing round, in fact, of half-confessed ennui. At least, a Platonist, an idealist, who attempts to discuss Horace at all, must confess thus frankly his own friendly hostility, if only to guard the hearer against the imperfect sympathy, doubtless the unfairness, of the critic.

In contrast with the meteoric passing of Lucretius, Horace's life-story is singularly complete and intelligible, with just enough romantic adventure, and early hardship, to have given him a wide view of the world.

Quintus Horatius Flaccus was born in rustic Venusia. Of his mother we hear nothing. His father was a former slave, later a *coactor*—collector of taxes or of private debts —and evidently thrifty. Horace never tried to conceal his humble origin, and in the fourth Satire of his first book he introduces this slave-born father in a lively dialogue, forming by practical advice and exemplary warnings the all but perfect character of his boy.

In Rome that boy, under his father's eye, went to school in luxury and well-attended. His master indeed, the "flog-
Satires, I., 6. Epist., II., 1, 70. ger Orbilius," won Horace's hearty ill-will, and an undesirable immortality of fame. His strenuous methods were doubtless one cause, also, of Horace's lasting dislike for Andronicus's Odyssey, Ennius's

epic, and the early writers generally, who offended his polished taste as Chaucer or Marlowe did Pope's.

For philosophy, or as we would say, university advantages, Horace, still like a young nobleman, went to Athens. This experience was interrupted by the civil war that followed Julius's murder. Brutus must have seen remarkable promise in the freedman's son at twenty-two, when he made him a tribune, or we may say, a colonel. The jealousy excited in fellow-students of far loftier birth Horace merely mentions as natural. He is proud of his success.

43 B.C.
Sat., I., 6, 50.

> "Here at home, as in war, to the foremost men was I pleasing."

Epist., I., 20, 23.

This Eastern campaigning does not seem to have been wholly arduous. Thus in one of the odes, written for an old comrade, it is recalled how

> "Often we sped the lingering day
> With wine unmixt, the while we lay
> Our shining locks with Syrian spikenard crowned."

Odes, II., 7.

Another bit of local color is seen in a rather disconsolate letter to a friend travelling in Asia:

> "Lebedos is it you praise, who are weary of voyage or travel?
> Yea, and I too there would happily linger, forgetting
> All that I loved, expecting them all in turn to forget me:
> There would I dwell, and gaze offshore at the furious waters."

Of course, utter failure and shipwreck of fortune came swiftly to Brutus's followers. Horace's brief military distinction made surer his utter fall. Drifting back to Rome, he found his father dead, his estates confiscated. For some years he gained a scant subsistence in a position apparently like our government clerkships at Washington. The

splendor of the world's capital constantly emphasized to the young veteran his own obscurity.

We know little in detail of the next four or five years, until the friendship of Virgil and Mæcenas lifted Horace to affluence and congenial social life. The cheerful bits of autobiography cited above were all actually composed years later, in self-contented retrospect. But his writing in this time of storm and stress, though it was successful in attracting the attention of the court, is stained with truly Roman vulgarity, and is often bitterly cynical.

SATIRES, I.

The oldest extant composition is by many thought to be the satire describing a quarrel in camp between two of Brutus's followers, one of whom is named Rupilius *Rex*, or King. When the final decision is referred to the commander, the other litigant closes his plea, and the brief sketch also, with the bold words:

Sat., I., 7.

"By the gods on high I beseech you, O Brutus,
Slay this King, since that, as I think, is the task of your kindred."

This first group of ten satirical pieces was not made up earlier than 35 B.C. Just before the one here cited stands in our collection the journal of the famous journey to Brundisium with Mæcenas. So we must hold the prosperous court-poet at thirty year responsible for the untranslatable foulness of the second Satire, which draws all too clearly on abundant and ignoble experience. It is plain, also, that loose living and deliberate coarseness of speech were no bar to Mæcenas's favor. Yet Virgil in the same group maintained his stainless purity of life and utterance.

The meeting with Virgil and Mæcenas *en route* to Brundisium is marked with sincere and truly Latin embraces. Next day, at Capua, Mæcenas plays ball, but the poets prefer their siesta, Horace excusing himself as weak-eyed, Virgil as dyspeptic. The sketch of this journey is as a whole delightful—except four really incredible lines.

Satires, i., v., 43.

With this first collection of his lay sermons on human frailties and follies Horace's claim on the cordial approval of the modern reader begins. The best descriptions of his earlier life are here to be found.

Horace did not regard the satires as poetry in the stricter sense at all, but as a sort of chatty, personal sketches in loose metrical form. The hexameter, used in them all, is evidently accepted as a familiar Latin measure. In these light miscellanies, the age, the coarse Roman taste, permitted almost anything.

Sat., i., 4, 56–62.

EPODES

But even these excuses hardly extend to the Epodes, which are severely lyrical in form. If the prevailing iambic measure, and the influence from the savage genius of the Greek Archilochos, seem to justify bitterness, it must be remembered that both master and metre are Horace's deliberate choice. These seventeen little poems are his entire lyric output down to the year 31 B.C. They are in many keys, the latest apparently nearing that of the happy later lyrics. The extravagant assaults on the sorceress Canidia, whoever she was, can hardly be justified. Other examples there are of personal ill-will, and also of crudeness, even the graver artistic sin of diffuseness. The longest flight of Horace's creative fancy, if it be not rather a translation, is the account of the Happy Isles beyond the Western Ocean. Here he even recalls the

Epodes, xvi., 41–62.

prophetic Fourth Bucolic. No less Virgilian and pastoral is the simplest, sweetest, and best-known of all the epodes, beginning

Epodes, II., 1-2.

"Blessèd is he, afar from business cares,
As were the men of old." . . .

But there is a mocking grin like Heine's in the last quatrain, wherein it is all put into the mouth of the old usurer Alfius, who, ever dreaming of a country life, calls in his loans: and after a fortnight places them again.

A passage of a later poem, revoking certain "hasty iambics," is by some students made to refer to most or all of this book. But that is hardly probable. The name "Epodes" is not Horatian, and seems to indicate merely the use of a shorter alternate line in each couplet. As a whole this roll is Horace's least effective utterance.

Odes, I., 16, 1-4.

SATIRES, II.

Soon after the Epodes appeared the second book of Satires. The measure is still the easy jogging hexameter. Abundant evidence appears of swift growth in these years. There is even a sustained attempt here at dramatic form, though all who speak, like the characters at Dr. Holmes's breakfast table, are but so many mouthpieces for the one familiar, equable, and welcome voice.

30 B.C.

Horace is sweetened, mellowed, not spoiled, by prosperity. Though he is frankly proud of Mæcenas's friendship, he will not confess that he shares the power, nor even the political confidence, of the court. He preaches simple diet, even a rustic life, yet gives also a connoisseur's hints on the perfect banquet. His heartiest utterance is of his love for the Sabine farm, Mæcenas's most

precious gift. The country mouse has much the better of the argument over his city kinsman. Yet Horace's slave Davus is allowed to ridicule his master for the restlessness with which he awaits, the furious haste with which he accepts, Mæcenas's bidding to the feast. On the whole we get the impression that our portly little bachelor is a good liver and a courtier, in practice, far more than a country gentleman, a student, or an abstemious philosopher.

One of Eugene Field's bold "Echoes" seems to hit very near the truth:

> "When favoring gales bring in my ships
> I hie to Rome and live in clover;
> Elsewise I steer my skiff out here
> And anchor till the storm blows over.
> Compulsory virtue is the charm
> Of life upon the Sabine Farm!"

Horace's mildly satirical, loosely artistic utterance had already outlasted its bitterness and its foulness. But the half-way house of life is past. Of strenuous effort, of fresh aspiration, there is hardly a hint. One certainly would not suppose, that a supremely successful venture, in an essentially new field, was just beginning. Yet so it proved.

ODES, I.–III.

Books I., II., and III. of Horace's odes form a single collection of eighty-eight lyric poems, issued by the author, and probably arranged by him just as we find it. The opening dedication to "Mæcenas, from ancestral kings descended," the yet prouder closing assertion

> "Completed is my monument,
> More durable than bronze,"

the parade in the first dozen odes of nearly as many novel

and difficult Greek metres,—all this indicates the fullest pride and confidence in the finished work. Especially notable also is the stanza opening the third book, whose first six poems seem to unite in one stately patriotic ode:

> "Songs until now unsung,
> Fit for the ears of boys or virgin girls,
> I sing, who am the Muses' priest."

These poems appear to have been Horace's serious task for at least seven years, beginning, to judge from all traceable historical allusions, when he was already thirty-five. This is our chief, best-known, most faultless book of Latin or indeed of classic lyrics,—using the word in the narrower sense, which excludes the larger choral songs of Pindar or of the Attic dramatists. It must seem strange to many, that classical scholars accept this fair-wrought artistic gift in a half-querulous spirit. Yet this is inevitable, and can be in some sense justified.

Lyric, Song, as an individual expression, uttered in music and words, is all but universal, and as old as love, hate, grief, warlike enthusiasm, adoration, or the sense of sin among men. It doubtless had less root in early Latium than in most lands. Perhaps the priestly chant was there almost its sole permanent form. But to Horace's ears, as to Catullus's, far clearer and fuller than to ours, came the manifold echoes of the older, more spontaneous, and yet living Hellenic minstrelsy.

Cf. supra, p. 4

Of Greek song-writers proper, four only are familiar names: the fierce soldier of fortune and creative genius Archilochos, the artist-pair—perhaps also lover-pair—of Lesbos, and the somewhat degenerate later singer of wine and passion, Anacreon. Each was a true artist, yet all uttered real feelings in forms fit and natural to their speech, largely original with themselves. They never deal in lit-

erary reminiscence, but offer us their own inner or outer visions.

All are essentially lost poets. Even the "Anacreontics," so popular with our grandsires in Moore's paraphrases, are themselves merely clever imitations in Anacreon's general tone, dating from the later centuries of Hellenic life. Sappho's love-lyric has left an irreparable gap in the story of literature.

Horace presents himself frankly as an imitator of these greater Greek singers. His Epodes were Archilochian in metre and spirit. Now, putting Catullus's school too hastily aside, he makes bold claim that he is the first

Odes, III., XXX., 13-14.

"Æolic song to modulate
To the Italian lyre."

His favorite measures are the Sapphic and Alcaic stanzas, both used by him with a rigid regularity of form unknown to the Lesbians themselves, or to Catullus.

Horace no doubt felt the superiority of the Greeks. In their language he had himself composed his first verses. These metres are, in Latin, so difficult that they bar out many words of a poetic vocabulary at best scanty, and they have actually never been used by anyone, with high success, since Horace's day. His own hearty distaste for the exertion of versifying is often expressed in more or less serious tone. With painful industry, like the bee, he "fashions his toilsome lays." Among his actual models must be included the learned Alexandrians, with their love for far-sought allusions and myths all but forgotten. Nearly all Horace's odes, then, are conscious and laborious imitations; many, it is not known how many, are free translations. His masters are bitterly missed.

Odes, IV., II., 31-2.

His range is far narrower than theirs. He recognizes

hatred of tyrants as the most popular note of Alcaios's lyre: but that note, of course, he cannot strike. In some Greek lyrics, as Alcman's, yet more in the choral songs of Aristophanes and Euripides, there is a real, a rapturous delight in natural scenery. Horace is fully at home only among men. Sappho, again, even in tantalizing half-lines and phrases, yet survives, as the very soul and voice of passionate love. Though Horace has celebrated his fickle flame under a dozen musical Greek names, not one can have inspired a deep and lasting feeling. Prattling Lalage, Neæra of the tangled hair, and all the rest, have just enough reality to help him turn a verse. Friendship, with Mæcenas and a few others, is the only close tie Horace knows. The brevity and uncertainty of life, the worry that haunts the palaces of the great, a goading, restless discontent, the craving for peace, are ever recurrent themes. Far indeed is this passionless, dreamless, hope less Epicurean from seeing the whole, or the best, of life.

His art is exquisite, is indeed, as has been said, unique and inimitable in its kind. Of all ingenious exercises in difficult metres these are the cleverest. Often a flash of loftier poetic insight glorifies one of his few and familiar themes, as when he offers sympathy only, not a word of insincere consolation, to Virgil on the death of his friend Varus. Indeed this and the address to the ship that bears Virgil to Greece are as heartfelt and tender as any lyric of friendship could be. The local color is often Italian even when we know that Horace has a Greek original before him, as when, in a close echo of Alcaios, he cries:

"Soracte's heights are white with snow,
The burdened pines are bending low,
The fettered brooks are still.
Heap high the logs, drive out the cold,
And from the Sabine vintage old
A generous goblet fill."

At times his keen humor beguiles us into a smile, as when his rash announcement of himself as a heaven-scaling swan draws down his own prompt ridicule, and he adds:

Odes, II., xx. Version of Sir Theodore Martin.

"Even now I feel the change begin!
And see, along my thighs
It creeps and creeps, the wrinkling skin,
In sturdy swan-like guise;
My body all above assumes
The bird, and white as snow
Along my shoulders airy plumes
Down to my fingers grow."

Above all, we note the frank, fearless, yet devoted tone always held toward Mæcenas, the cordial constancy indicated even when Augustus's frown had made the old minister's friendship less prized by the selfish or timid. Perhaps the boldest note in the odes is that in which he reproves some such utterance of Mæcenas as was mentioned on a previous page, and makes the prophecy which was so remarkably fulfilled, some fifteen years later, by the death of both friends in the same year.

Supra, p. 153

Odes, II., xvii. Sir Theodore Martin.

"Think not that I have sworn a bootless oath.
Yes, we shall go, shall go,
Hand linked in hand, whene'er thou leadest, both
The same sad road below!"

This close friendship included also Licinius Murena, the brother, or near kinsman, of Mæcenas's wife, much beloved and honored by Augustus, but fatally involved in the conspiracy against the emperor's life in 23 B.C. Horace seems to have realized the danger of Murena's audacious, passionate nature, and addresses him in one of the finest odes, bidding him

"Not always tempt the far-off deep,
Nor yet too timorously creep
Along the treacherous shore."

Most blest, Horace assures him, is

"He that holds fast the golden mean,
And lives contentedly between
The lowly and the great."

Indeed, the question whether Horace published this collection as early as the spring of 23 B.C., or three, even four, years later, is made to turn largely on this very poem. As Virgil effaced Gallus from the last Georgic, so Horace, we are assured, would not have issued these verses after the fall of Murena. They may, however, have been already too well known to suppress. Many of the "occasional" poems must have been circulated singly as they were written. Thus the oldest datable ode, I., 37, rejoicing at the death of Cleopatra, of course did not lie seven years in Horace's desk. But the line

"Through time un-noted, as a tree doth grow
Marcellus's fame"

would surely have been either expanded, or suppressed altogether, if Augustus's princely heir had been dead when this collection was made. So we are again brought back to the year 23 B.C. as the latest date.

Odes, I., xii., 45-46.

EPISTLES, I.

It was apparently three years thereafter that Horace published the twenty delightful brief pieces in hexameter verse known as the first book of Epistles. Many appear to be genuine letters, such as the hearty invitation to the congenial younger poet Tibullus to come and be beguiled of his melancholy at the Sabine farm. All are witty,

wise, easy, and mellow. Here Horace is at his best, and sour must he be who could cavil at aught. Though Horace is the first to insist that this is not poetry, it is really often more poetical than the most labored of odes. The philosophic, even the moralizing tone grows to be prevalent, but there is no strenuous preaching. A tolerant, often a merry critic of life, and also of literature, Horace always remained. Even his ennui is uttered in phrases of pure gold :

"This one hour, that a god has accorded to you in his bounty,
Take with a grateful hand, nor plan next year to be happy.
So that wherever your life may be spent you will say you enjoy it.
For if anxieties only by foresight or reason are banished,
Not by a spot that affords some outlook wide on the waters.
Never our nature, but only the sky do we change as we travel.
Toilsome idleness wears us out. On wagon or shipboard
Comfort it is that we crave. Yet that which you seek is within you,
Even at Ulubræ :—if you but lack not a spirit contented."

The last of these Epistles includes a naïve description of Horace's person, and gives the impression that he would now gladly lay the pen aside. Though he had dared refuse the invidious or irksome honor of being Augustus's private secretary, there were more imperative calls that he could not ignore. The celebration of the great Sæcular epoch in 17 B.C., and other courtly occasions, drew the philosophic moralist back, with some evident reluctance, to the more laborious lyric forms. The hymn sung by youths and maids on the proud anniversary day is melodious, graceful, orthodox.

ODES, IV.

With the addition of some early pieces, also, sufficient material was accumulated for a fourth book of odes, issued at Augustus's desire about 13 B.C. It does not increase, nor detract from, Horace's assured fame. The poem on Augustus's soldierly stepson Drusus is perhaps the most martial and Roman of all Horatian strains.

Odes, iv., 4.

EPISTLES, II.

The second book of "Epistles" contains two essays only, both chiefly dealing, in rather whimsical and desultory fashion, with literary questions. The first is inscribed to Augustus, and complains that the oldest Roman poetry only is popular. The idyllic passage on the origin of Fescennine comedy has been cited already.

P. 18.

Horace felt that Plautus performed his mercenary tasks carelessly and roughly, that Andronicus, Nævius, even Ennius, were rude; in fact, that true taste was a very recent acquisition from Hellas. Even among Greeks he considers authorship an art fit only for a decadent age. He declares himself unfitted for drama or epic, to which latter task Augustus had evidently urged him. His chief claim for literature is its didactic and patriotic value. There are flashes of deeper feeling, like:

"Childhood's tender and stammering voice by the poet is guided."

A still clearer allusion to such poems of his own as the "Carmen Sæculare" may be heard in these lines:

"Whence would innocent youths, or maids unconscious of wedlock,
Learn their prayer, if the Muse had not accorded a poet?"

The second epistle is somewhat briefer, but exceeds two hundred verses. The key is more distinctly querulous. The tone of advanced age would be absurd, if we did not know that Horace's life was really almost spent.

"One by one do the passing years wrest from us our pleasures,
Jesting, and love, the delights of the banquet, and games they have stolen,
Poetry too they clutch at."

The city, with its daylong, nightlong uproar, is described in lurid tints:

"Yonder a mad dog runs, here tumbles a sow in her wallow."

In a really bitter passage Horace alludes to the public "authors' readings." He has to hear and praise the wearisome verses of "Callimachus"—who is pretty clearly the uncongenial and assertive Propertius—while he himself in turn is praised and dubbed "Alcæus."

It is in this connection that we should consider an essay of Horace, actually printed by some editors as the third epistle of the second book, but forced into undue prominence, even given in some later ages a sort of oracular authority, as the Augustan utterance, "De Arte Poetica": On the Art of Poetry.

This too claims to be merely a letter, in 476 colloquial hexameters, addressed to a pair of young friends ambitious of poetic fame. In length, then, it is slightly less than the two previous epistles combined. The tone is somewhat more strenuous, but on the whole colloquial, desultory, still. When he ventures even to give advice on the style of tragedy, it is but advice, given by one who himself wisely abstained, on the popular Roman diversion of recasting in Latin the outworn myths of early Hellas.

The chief virtue, for this critic, is propriety, good taste, moderation, the avoidance of bold contrasts. In fact, these are the maxims of an age like Pope's and Addison's, when the imagination languishes, and elaboration, form, style, seem more weighty than subject-matter. Most familiar of all is the warning against the "purple patch." It would have persuaded Shakespeare to cancel Jacques's "Seven Ages of Man," or Hamlet's soliloquy. Horace detests startling contrasts. He would have joined Voltaire in protesting against the undignified grave-diggers who "mar the pathos of Ophelia's funeral."

As always, Horace's discourse is full of shrewd observations, of sound common-sense based on abundant experience of life and letters. From time to time, a bold and earnest phrase flashes forth, *e.g.*:

> "The master-pieces of Hellas,
> Still with unweary hand unroll, by night or by daylight."

But in the next verse is the old complaint, that Plautus is too popular.

In general, this, like all the later work, is well worthy of attentive, even repeated, perusal. Many lines and phrases are current coin among the cultivated. But it is no Aristotle or Aristarchos who speaks. Even their right to speak with authority may be effectively disputed: Horace never makes such a claim. All literary criticism records, rather than guides, the flight of the truly creative imagination: but Horace essays little more than gossip by the wayside. We are glad to note that even his theory of the artist's aim turns mellower again, in this last utterance:

> "Either to give enjoyment or profit the poets are wishful,
> Or to say that which at once is useful in life, and delightful."

As we turn away from the two most popular poets of Rome, perhaps of the world, we may repeat, that Horace

has supplied the fit expression for almost every common thought of earthly men. The dreamer, the mystic, the idealist, of any age, finds no company more congenial than the Sibyl's, as she threads the vague mazes of the spirit world, guiding Virgil to that far-off vale where in unearthly yet unfading light the past and the remotest future meet, and are to the eye of faith revealed, interpreted, reconciled. We gladly believe that these two rarely gifted men loved each other. In both we see gleams of the old Roman freedom and manly pride. But they, and Livy, are the last of their generation.

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The best student's edition of Horace is Kiessling's with German notes. For lovers of literature Professor Shorey's edition of the Odes and Epodes is indispensable, for the manifold echoes of Horatian phrases, gathered from all later authors down to our day.

Among English translators Sir Theodore Martin is generally reckoned the happiest, though Conington's freer renderings of the Satires and Epistles are quite as readable. Least successful of the numberless versions are those which would attempt in English the alcaics, sapphics, and yet more hopeless combinations barely attained, by Horace's own painful effort, in a language certainly more melodious, better quantified, more flexible than our Saxon speech. The lighter tones of Horace are sometimes best caught by the audacious and irreverent genius of Eugene Field. In truth, some of his Echoes almost better the originals. Mr. Gladstone found leisure to enter this domain also.

Sellar, Martin, Mackail, Ribbeck, and numberless others, have made sympathetic studies of Horace's life and genius. Professor Tyrrell has set forth some of his shortcomings, perhaps more boldly than any other recent critic. Miss Preston has a delightful sketch in the Warner Library, and also an essay in an old *Atlantic*, on a visit to the Sabine farm.

CHAPTER XXIV

OVID

43 B.C.–18 A.D.

BETWEEN Virgil and Ovid there is a moral gulf. It is not, of course, that Rome, or the world, has suddenly grown shamelessly vicious. Virgil was a dreamer, almost out of touch with the coarser side of realities. We have heard his note of extravagant though doubtless sincere prophecy, in the Fourth Bucolic and the Sixth Æneid. From clear-sighted Livy comes the prompt answering cry of disgust and despair. Even he declares that the restoration of temples and religious rites was a very prominent feature of the emperor's policy. Yet the deification of Octavian himself must always have been, in aristocratic and enlightened circles, a hollow absurdity. A yet more hopeless task was the revival of old-fashioned morality, and especially of the family ties, by a cold-hearted imperial libertine who had divorced his own wife when his only child Julia was a few days old, and tore Livia from her reluctant husband three months before Drusus's birth. Mæcenas's peace of mind as a married man was disturbed by Augustus himself. Neither Virgil nor Horace appears ever to have thought of marriage.

43 B.C.–18 A.D.

Among the old aristocracy, generally, compulsory inaction in politics, ever-growing wealth, and Oriental luxury, wrought their natural results. The princess Julia, though austerely educated, proved the most dissolute and shameless woman of her day. Under her leadership Rome plunged into every form of brutalizing vice. If we find it

hard, as well we may, to listen to the baseless optimism of Horace, who in his latest flight of odes assures Augustus that vice is now unknown and crime always meets prompt vengeance, yet it is only fair to remember, that Julia, at least, really concealed her character from her father down to the year 2 B.C. Unless, indeed, his sudden awakening, his decree for her banishment to a lonely isle, his life-long resentment, his refusal even to admit her ashes into his own mausoleum, may require for their explanation the stronger hypothesis that she had been entangled in one of the plots against the emperor's life.

It is not to be imagined that manly dignity and womanly modesty then, or ever, vanished from the world. In this very century the voice of Paul rings through the Greek cities. There is a growing restlessness in the Germanic lands.

"Out of the shadow of night
The world rolls into light."

It is merely one corrupt metropolis that is tottering. But in imperial Latin literature little is seen or heard of save Rome itself. So it is not strange if the path leads steadily downward, and the light grows ever dimmer.

The best age of the Latin people was long since departed. Even in the realm of art, technique perfects itself but ideals perish. Already the last poet whom we really desire to portray in full as he actually was, whom we wish our own youth to know entire, has passed by. Ovid, in many respects more skilful than any predecessor, is the eager laureate of Julia's court. His genius, and his immense influence ever since, must be duly acknowledged. Yet from this time on, there is upon nearly every literary career a dark shadow, a side of which we shall say as little as we honestly may. These poets we read in expurgated editions, or in mere extracts, for they love to dwell on

thoughts and subjects which all noble-minded folk avoid or veil in reticence.

Above all, imperial Rome degrades the name of Love to the level of mere animal passion. For this the scholar, at least, can never claim even the poor excuse, his ignorance of nobler conceptions. Though no age of chivalry had yet taught the Mediterranean world to idealize and deify woman, yet Antigone, Alkestis, and their peers, thronged the stage of heroic drama. The Iliad, above all, was never forgotten: indeed one of the best interpretations of its ethical meaning is offered by Horace: and in all that procession of stately figures not one shines clearer than Hector and Andromache with their baby boy. No more perfect picture of pure love as the incentive to a generous heroic life has ever yet been drawn. Few men of any age have known their Homer better than did Ovid.

Horace, Epist., i., 2.

Publius Ovidius Naso was born at Sulmo, from parents of knightly rank, and naturally was sent to the schools of rhetoric. He travelled early, and with profit, in Greece, Asia, and Sicily. Utterance in verse was second nature to him from boyhood. His career in public office was cut short by his success as a poet. Popularity he seems to have won promptly. After two brief marital experiences, both ended by divorce, he lived long happily with a third wife. We need not, any more in his case than in Horace's, interpret every poetical love-affair as an actual experience: but he shows only too perfect acquaintance with life's baser sides.

Of the three well-defined periods in Ovid's career, the first is almost wholly taken up with erotic verse. It reveals the artificial, unlyrical spirit of the time, that such a master of rhythm feels himself limited by his themes to the elegiac couplet, since he will not essay an epic subject

in pure hexameter. This recalls the tyranny of English rhymed pentameter from Dryden to Johnson.

AMORES

The forty-eight poems thus entitled are nearly all true to the name. In its present form the collection appeared about 13 B.C. The poet congratulates the reader on having but three books in this edition, though in earlier youth he had published five. Certainly nothing has been suppressed for the sake of modest reticence. Many are purely imaginative studies. It need not be supposed, for instance, that Ovid had really beaten a lady, and pulled out her hair. Violence and remorse are simply among the stock themes to be treated. Here his neatest classical allusion is to Diomedes, wounding Aphrodite in Homeric battle :

Amores, I., 7.

"He is the first that a goddess has smitten : and I am the other !"

For some of the coarsest pieces in the collection we chance to have lighter Greek originals.

Even his famous Corinna is hardly a real person. The elegy on her dead parrot is harmlessly playful, but lacks the fire and tenderness of Catullus's verses on Lesbia's sparrow. Indeed, there is a striking want of earnest feeling in all these twelve hundred rather monotonous couplets.

Once, however, even here, the measure finds noble use, when young Tibullus, himself a poet of passion, is mourned for in lofty and scholarly yet sincere verses. Ovid is even aware that this is the proper function of the elegiac rhythm.

Amores, III., 9.

"If once Memnon a mother lamented, a mother Achilles,
If men's piteous fates trouble the goddesses' hearts,

Rend thine innocent locks, oh Elegy, rend them in sorrow.
Now this name shall abide, only too truly, for thee!"

This is probably the only piece in the entire collection of real and lasting interest. A very lively and harmless glimpse at the public entertainments, and the sparkling, shallow wit of the time is offered in the "Flirtation at the Circus," which could be translated truthfully without grave offence.

DE ARTE AMATORIA, ETC.

Much later, in three books of nearly eight hundred verses each, Ovid treated, in mock-didactic fashion, the Art of Love. The last of these three rolls even essays to teach the other sex how to charm. There is naturally no lack of Greek mythological illustration, easily dragged down to this level, and a favorite founders' legend of Rome is also freely handled. Cleverness, a keen eye for each human frailty, is everywhere to be noted, as when the Sabine maids, we are told,

"Come to look on at the games,—and come, no less, to be looked at."

But the science he teaches is simply that of making love to your friend's wife successfully and without detection. He denies, in his later days, that he had himself ever disturbed family happiness. So much the completer is the degradation of his art. Yet even so grave a critic as Professor Sellar is disposed to regard this as Ovid's masterpiece, and compares it, not unfitly, to Don Juan. The author has "come to forty year" no sager than of old.

The "Remedia Amoris" may be considered a mere supplement, making a long fourth book. The "Medicamina Faciei Fœmineæ," on the care of the feminine complexion, is a fragment of exactly a hundred lines. This may be the

first of the imitations of Ovid, which were frequent down to modern times.

As to the poems thus far discussed, the most surprising quality is their cheerfulness. Empty, ignoble, selfish, as is the social life therein depicted, it has not apparently lost its charm. The consciousness of sin seems as entirely absent as in a comedy of Congreve. There is little trace even of the *ennui* which Horace cannot conceal. Perhaps this very complacency has always made Ovid's immoral works peculiarly popular—and harmful.

HEROIDES

The series of imaginary letters from love-lorn heroines has this happy distinction, that we are safely escaped from Augustan realism into the realm of remoter artistic imagination. Indeed, here extreme coarseness is the exception. The sustained study of passionate feeling, and its graceful expression, must be pronounced well worthy of attention from the mature and thoughtful.

Ovid shows thorough familiarity, already, with the whole world of early myth, from Homer down. Indeed, although he naturally finds Andromache a less congenial character, yet Briseis, Helen, even the prudent Penelope, are included. Œnone, the fickle prince's earlier flame, loved before he knew himself a king's son, also indites an epistle to Paris. That writing was unknown in the Homeric age is, no doubt, too pedantic a criticism.

In such tales as that of Hero and Leander, Ovid's unique powers in narrative and graphic description stand fully revealed. In Hypermestra, who of Danaos's fifty daughters alone refuses to slay her bridegroom, we have, even, noble traits and thoughts. Indeed Ovid, whose nature is always kindly, really seems to show in some of these studies tenderness, and deep insight into the feminine heart. Oftener, however, we listen to a mere ingenious rhetorician: or

again, while Helen toys with Paris's advances, we realize that Ovid, under these classic names, paints exactly the conditions about him in Rome.

In Dido's letter to Æneas our poet brings himself into close and dangerous rivalry with the Fourth Æneid, yet deserves a careful hearing. The epistle of Medea may remind us, again, that Ovid had already in early youth completed a Latin tragedy on this familiar subject. It is often referred to as a masterpiece, though perhaps never played, the Roman stage having now reached its lowest degradation in the Pantomime, a form of silent acting, sometimes accompanied by recitation or song from behind the scenes. Two colorless lines of this tragedy alone survive. The letter of Medea to Jason may utilize the same motives as did the play. It covers exactly the same ground as the opening of Euripides's tragedy, reminding Jason of past favors and present wrongs, and foreshadowing the terrible revenge which Medea is to visit on his young Greek wife and her own children by him.

The letter of Sappho to her lover Phaon hardly comes under the title, "Heroides," and is probably not to be charged to Ovid. Indeed, many of these epistles, especially the responses, are believed to be by another hand. The entire collection is swelled to nearly four thousand lines. The very mass is not without significance. This first section, thus far described, of Ovid's facile product is nearly equal to the whole Æneid in length.

But it is time to turn to the second and most valuable division of his life-work. The Heroides have already foreshadowed the Metamorphoses.

METAMORPHOSES

It is a strange caprice of fortune that makes the frivolous versifier of the Amores a chief, perhaps the chief authority for Hellenic myths. We cannot in most cases even name

with confidence his Greek originals, though Parthenios, already mentioned as a member of Catullus's group, had also composed "Metamorphoseis." We cannot suppose that Ovid had the least trace of living faith in the marvels he describes. These transformations have their root chiefly in the notion of metempsychosis, involving of course a belief, such as Ovid hardly pretended to hold, in the continued existence of the soul. Even the account of the divine beings, and of their abodes along the Milky Way, is imaginative, vivid, but by no means reverent. Indeed, Ovid's gods behave and talk decidedly worse than Homer's, who in turn are notably inferior in ethical quality to the human characters of the epics. Even Homer seems in this matter cynical rather than naïve. Certainly when an Augustan poet frankly draws the homes, the intrigues, the characters of the gods on contemporary Roman models, the audacity and irreverence are unquestionable. It is evident, that the cleverest of Latin versifiers and story-tellers simply hit upon this large and, on the whole, congenial theme, and concentrated upon it unexpected energy, sufficient art and learning, but no serious belief or purpose.

Beginning with the moulding of the world from Chaos into Cosmos, and ending with the change of Julius Cæsar's human nature into a constellation, there were few marvels of myth or authentic history which Ovid's ingenuity could not bring within his rubric. His own interest, his delight in the task, never seems to flag. Indeed, this freshness, even happiness, of Ovid often disarms our criticism. His inventive genius, the variety of his incidents and scenery, is unending. There is probably no writer who by deft, close-woven detail in description could have made so credible, or at least conceivable, and even pathetic, an incident like the transformation of Dryope into a tree. The same marvel recurs several times in other fables, yet there is no repetition of the touches. Of more

Metamorphoses, ix., 334-94.

than two hundred myths, each set forth in graphic completeness, every one is clearly told, and more or less interesting in itself.

The capital weakness of the work, however, has just been indicated. It has no inner unity. Many myths are indeed cleverly interlinked, sometimes with slight alterations to that very end. Often a nominal connection is devised, as, when Arachne vies with Pallas in the weaving of tapestry, the pictures therein wrought and described are episodic tales in themselves. Often, however, we have simply a series of narratives told in turn on some special occasion, as the Arabic stories are centred merely in the fate of Scheherazade. In truth, the very ingenuity with which Ovid forbids his own thread ever to break off grows in itself wearisome, and we always prefer to read him piecemeal.

That the poet creates a new world, or reshapes for us our familiar universe, cannot be truly said of Ovid, as it was of Lucretius, from whose larger and really far more reverent plan the Metamorphoses borrow much, in their most ambitious passages. At best, we lie but for a dreamy hour under the magician's spell, tracing the graceful outlined shapes, rich in color, but not after all truly alive, that throng the panels upon the unsubstantial walls and low ceiling of his summer palace. The arabesques and interlinking curves are often ingenious but never essential, the pictures are seldom if ever wholly his creation, not rarely they remind us dangerously of nobler originals: for even Euripides the realist is far loftier, homely Hesiod more sincere. At times, too, our eyes still captive in the meshes of the endlessly interwoven pattern, we long for the soaring sky, for the free strong winds of Nature herself.

So Ovid's confident closing prophecy is indeed fulfilled, and more: for no longer

> "The might of Rome o'erawes the subject earth,"

while he himself shall yet

"Survive familiar on the lips of men:"

but even as the author of these twelve thousand flowing hexameters he stands upon no pedestal of honor, nor is he enshrined in our loving thoughts as is Catullus or Sappho. We take from his hand many a gift, almost always regretting that it is passed on to us by him alone.

Yet the Phaëthon episode could hardly have had, elsewhere, a more splendid setting, a more absorbing interest, than it here receives. Sometimes, above all in Baucis and Philemon, the reckless humor, the unwearying ingenuity of Ovid are at their best, while the tale itself cannot fail to supply the pathetic interest, the nobler meaning, which he certainly never added. In the case of Pyramus and Thisbe the greatest of masters in comedy as in tragedy has so convulsed us with mirth that the Latin rendering seems, by contrast, sadly and soberly true. Ovid was doubtless here Shakespeare's informant.

FASTI

Of the remaining works the account must be much briefer. The Fasti is a subject to which not all Ovid's ingenuity could give even the shadow of unity. It is a versified calendar, made with rather inadequate astronomical learning. Each historic anniversary is duly celebrated. The symbolic ritual of every feast is explained as well as may be by traditional legend or inventive myth. In general we have a year-book for loyal and pious Romans.

This work ranks almost with Livy's or Varro's as a quarry of archæologic lore, but only single episodes can claim a wider human interest. Only six books of the twelve survive, the first one in a revised form evidently undertaken in exile.

For into this self-satisfied, prosperous life came, after Ovid's fiftieth year, the dignity of a real, a great calam-

ity. By the emperor's decree he was suddenly banished to the town of Tomi, on the cold and desolate northern shores of the Black Sea. One cause for this punishment was the "De Arte Amatoria," though published nine years before,—just about the time of Julia's banishment. The other reason, also indicated by Ovid himself, was his guilty knowledge of some great court scandal. As the younger Julia, Augustus's granddaughter, had followed in her mother's wayward steps, and in this very year also went perforce into life-long seclusion, it seems natural to surmise that the two departures were in some way connected. The extravagant notion that Ovid was himself a lover of either Julia, and even celebrated her imperial charms under the veil of "Corinna," is long since abandoned.

From the forlorn exile came, at least, utterances of sincere and deep feeling in the elegies known as "Tristia," and some vivid descriptions of the land of ice and forests in the Epistulæ ex "Ponto," still in the same familiar couplet. Even bitter words against enemies in Rome now escape his pen. Ovid's property was not confiscated; he was not in actual confinement: but neither Augustus himself nor the colder-hearted Tiberius ever recalled the homesick exile, who died at Tomi, when about sixty years old.

One is inclined, on turning away from this forlorn Crimean grave, to utter a word of gentler judgment. Ovid was never self-conscious, never jealous, never cruel. He was a loyal devotee of his art, and grudged no study, no pains, in perfecting himself. In his favorite couplet all who have followed him are but inferior imitators of his rhythm. To his encyclopædic knowledge and facile pen we are indebted for scores of our favorite Greek tales. If he never raised his myth to a loftier meaning, he at least gives it many a deft minor touch in the telling. While as an artist he deserves, on the whole, our gratitude, his lack of moral sense is almost common to his entire generation.

In the painters and sculptors of the Renaissance, in poets so diverse as Dante, Milton, William Morris, Tennyson, Browning, and countless others, the influence of Ovid can be unmistakably traced.

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The chief source for the story of Ovid's life is his autobiographical poem, Tristia, IV., 10, 1–132.

The Metamorphoses must be read diligently in English, if not in Latin. Indeed, it may yet be accepted as the best basis for connected literary study of Greek mythology itself. The translation in blank verse by Henry King is quite faithful, and not ungraceful, though hardly the work of a poet. William Morris might well have essayedthis task rather than the Æneid. The Bohn volumes have many useful references to other classical authors.

School readers use chiefly episodes from the Metamorphoses, with some bits of the Fasti and Tristia, perhaps from the Heroides one or two such letters as Penelope's. Scholars need no information as to such special editions as the Metamorphoses by Zingerle, Fasti by Peter or Paley, Tristia by Owen, etc. Ribbeck in his "Römische Dichtung" gives a very detailed and sympathetic study of all Ovid's works.

CHAPTER XXV

THE ELEGIAC POETS

THE oldest metre of the classical poets, the hexameter, never lost its position of honor. Especially, epic, in Latin as in Greek, as we shall see, long upheld the form brought over by Ennius from Homer. The first Greek stanza was a couplet, produced by shortening every second verse of the dactylic line, the third and sixth foot being reduced to a single syllable each. The general effect thus attained is a sort of dying fall, contrasting sharply with the exultant bound of the hexameter.

The most famous early Greek elegiast is Mimnermos, and his is also the first Hellenic utterance of unmanly repining and ignoble love-longing. His exquisite music, skilfully revived in the Alexandrian age, four or five centuries later, was also echoed cleverly in Latin by Catullus, who understood its peculiar fitness for a dirge. He wisely puts nearly all his most forceful utterances of hatred or love rather into hendecasyllables and iambics. But Horace's polished Sapphics, Alcaics, etc., seem to have discouraged his successors, and the lighter lyrical measures are hardly heard again in classical Latin. It has been mentioned that Ovid felt himself limited to pure hexameter or the elegiac couplet, with a distinct sense of greater dignity and seriousness in the former.

Supra, p. 120.

Supra, p. 194

Supra, p. 205

Catullus as well as Ovid, then, must be included, and very prominent, in any complete discussion of Roman elegy. There is a notable group, however, of Augustan poets who

are so limited to this measure—as well as to the utterance of sensual love,—that they are especially regarded as the elegiac versifiers. One or another of these short careers may appeal with unique force even to the sympathy of a modern man or woman, but all are clearly minor poets, judged by their limited influence on the literature and thought of later peoples. The measure is a highly artificial one, shutting out many Latin words, requiring often an unnatural order, and always struggling against the ordinary prose cadences. Truly popular such verse could never be. The literary forms are diverging more and more from the speech of the people.

From Catullus's time, and no doubt much earlier, the writing of verse, especially erotic verse, was a very general accomplishment of the educated: that poetry was a living force in the national life is not so clearly shown. Catullus in his own poems mentions many well-beloved versifiers, of both sexes. Men like Varro, Cicero, Julius Cæsar, Augustus, Mæcenas, Pollio, so busy and otherwise so diverse, shared in this indulgence, from which, in truth, few men of cultivation and sentiment have ever held wholly aloof.

The especial group already referred to is indicated in a passage of the Tristia as Gallus, Tibullus, Propertius,—and Ovid himself. This number we shall somewhat increase. We have already met the low-born soldier Gallus, the lover of "Lycoris." The latter was an actress—a *mima*,—known on the stage as "Cytheris." She had been attached to at least two famous men, Brutus and Antony. With the latter she had even shared an open triumphal progress through Italy under the more aristocratic name "Volumnia." We have heard in the Tenth Eclogue Gallus's complaint of her fickleness. He devoted his four books of elegies chiefly to her. Be-

Tristia, iv., 10, 53-54.

sides original poems he translated Euphorion, the most learned, and pedantic in mythic lore, of the Alexandrian school. These diversions all belong to his early youth.

Gallus won Augustus's favor by bravery in the civil wars, and was made prefect of Egypt after Antony's death. By erecting statues of himself, inscribing his own exploits on the pyramids, and other acts of foolish vanity, he fell, like Murena, and in disgrace took his own life. Perhaps Augustus suppressed Gallus's poems, as well as Virgil's latest verses in his friend's honor. Certainly only *one* line has been preserved, and judicious Quintilian grants him but a single word of dispraise, "harsher" (or, more difficult: *durior*). If he means, literally, as he appears to do, harsher than Propertius, it may help reconcile us to our loss.

PROPERTIUS

46(?)–16(?) B.C.

This poet was born in Umbria, at or near Assisi, St. Francis's town. Though impoverished by the last civil wars in Italy, his family were able to educate him for the law. His life seems to have been spent almost wholly in Rome. He was still almost a boy when he fell under the influence of "Cynthia." Her social position was no better than Lycoris's, though she had noble Roman ancestry, education, poetic power, and wealth, or at least luxury through her lovers' gifts. She was much older in every sense than Propertius, to whom she made the first advances. He claims to have been her faithful slave for five years. As to the existence and great prominence of such women in Roman social life there is no question. In each case we may treat the poet's statements as literally true, as pure fiction, or as a free composite picture made up from various originals.

That Cynthia appears as a single woman, as a mistress, or again as a matron, is a minor detail. We are dealing with a time when all such relations were but a temporary convenience, and the elemental moral law itself a half-forgotten convention, like formal piety.

Propertius's first book of elegies was wholly devoted to Cynthia. Published very early, it won the friendship of Mæcenas, who advised him to devote his gift rather to Augustus's praise and to patriotic themes. But he declares that Cynthia has made him a poet, that she was sung in his first verses and shall be in his last.

As a matter of fact, his ninety-one pieces are all in elegiac couplets, and sixty are dedicated to Cynthia. These treat all the phases of a lawless passion. Though much in the method of erotic poetry is traditional, Cynthia convinces us of her own reality, as Ovid's Corinna never does. Her unfaithfulness, and their quarrels, cause him to utter the ugliest truths as to her real character.

The ignoble and rather monotonous subject is not the only fault of these verses. Propertius's mythology is recondite, his style itself is labored and obscure, his vanity is boundless. He is not a very lovable character. Yet a truly Roman energy and vigor, at times a manful rebellion against the chains that bind him, above all a truly poetical and original power, have won him in our own time a small but enthusiastic circle of admirers.

Though Ovid was the confidant of his early passion, and Virgil the object of his adoring admiration, even Mæcenas's friendship does not seem to have brought Propertius into pleasant personal relations with Horace. Neither mentions the other, and it is quite evident that under the name of "Callimachus" the younger poet is mockingly assailed in Horace's latest Epistle. Propertius had given himself the name of the Roman Callimachus, whose birth is Umbria's chief source

Epist., II., 2, 91-101.

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ROMAN SHIPS.

From the Trajan column.

of pride. One can easily believe that to Horace, especially Horace grown gray, virtuous, and philosophic, Propertius's "straining after strong expression, self-consciousness, self-assertion," as Professor Sellar well says, would be distasteful. His rough vigor, even, would repel such a critic hardly less.

Though the poet evidently died in early youth, he did outlive his passion for Cynthia, and became interested in nobler themes. For instance, when Augustus lost his nephew and heir, the young Marcellus, Propertius put the elegy to its fittest use, though he nowhere approaches the tender beauty of Virgil's lines. Especially in the last of his four (or five) books he declares his determination to devote all his genius to the fatherland, and the roll is in fact largely filled with patriotic utterances. The pæan on the victory of Augustus as Actium, though written for an anniversary fifteen years after the event, may fairly be put beside Horace's famous ode. Cynthia is dead, and a powerful poem describes her ghost as visiting and reproaching her forgetful lover. She moreover prophesies his own approaching death. Yet beside this is set a vivid account of a merry adventure together in their happiest days.

iv., 18.

Æneid, vi., 861–87.

v., 6.

Horace, i., 37.

v., 7.

v., 8.

The last poem in the collection is a dirge for Cornelia, the wife of Paulus. This deserves high place, though hardly the highest, among Latin elegies. It has even something of the pathetic simplicity which was noted in a much older and briefer epitaph. The dead wife appeals to her husband:

Supra, p. 17.

"Now unto thee I entrust our mutual pledges, our children.
Now our household begins wholly thy burden to be.
If thou indeed must grieve, yet weep in solitude only.
Greet them with tearless cheeks, when for thy kisses they come.

Paulus, enough if thou shalt spend thy nights in lamenting,
While full often in dreams ever my face shall appear."

This poem is also assigned to the year 16 B.C. No allusions elsewhere indicate a later date, and we surmise that the prophecy of Cynthia's wraith was promptly fulfilled: that indeed some incurable disease suggested the vision, possibly also turned the young poet's mind to solemn thoughts, and also to purer human relations.

TIBULLUS

While Propertius has left us two thousand couplets, scarce half that number bear Tibullus's name, and even these we shall see reason to divide among three authors at least. We cannot trace with confidence either his inner or outer biography. Yet he comes much nearer our hearts than Propertius or Ovid. Doubtless Horace's hearty affection for him in life, and Ovid's graceful tribute after his death, help win him our good-will: the more as Tibullus was not precisely of their group.

Horace, Epist., I., 4.
Amores, III., 9.
Supra, pp. 197, 206

The chief rival of Mæcenas as a patron of letters was Marcus Valerius Messalla, himself a gallant soldier, a fearless public-spirited citizen, an orator, a grammarian, an historian. In his inner circle all these elegies were written, by whatever hands. Tibullus, in particular, gives us a most favorable impression of Messalla.

64 B.C.–8 A.D.

Tibullus is a gentle nature, a genuine poet on a few simple themes. Though he loves Messalla, he detests war and the camp, has little taste for the city, and is really content with simple rustic life. He never utters a confident claim for immortal fame such as Horace's or Ovid's. He burdens his verse with no Alexandrian pedantry nor far-sought lore of any sort. Over much, but not all, of his

verse is the trail of moral uncleanness. His elegies are chiefly devoted to two equally unworthy and mercenary flames, "Delia" and "Nemesis." When we escape them the dreamy poet is not unlike a youthful, unambitious Virgil. Both are happiest when they flee from reality into a gentler imagined golden age, where the husbandman tunes his pipe, care-free, and dances in joyous Bacchus's honor. His gentleness to animals, again, can hardly be paralleled save in verses of the austere Lucretius.

E.g., II., i, 31-38.

"Either a lamb or a kid, by the heedless mother deserted,
Not unwillingly I home in my bosom would bring."

When he echoes Catullus, it is some sweet, sincere note like:

Cf. supra, p. 119.

"If I may rest my frame on the familiar couch."

Over this amiable youthful head hovers the prophecy of early death. Bitter disenchantment comes, yet hope still beckons him on. He knows his own weakness:

"Often, how oft, have I sworn to return no more to her threshold:
Wisely I swore and well: yet did my footsteps return."

Tibullus is an extremely lovable personage, and we are glad to gain from Horace's allusions a glimpse of healthy, sturdy rural happiness, somewhat more satisfying than the impression won from the short-lived youth's own verses. As we hear him, especially in these two books, this minor poet is unique in tone, and, in a careful but copious selection, should be read by every young student of Latin literature.

While neither Delia nor Nemesis is vivid enough to make us quite sure of her reality, it is yet a slight shock to unroll the third of these slender volumes, and find its six elegies devoted to yet another, Neæra! The name is

so familiar and conventional that we need not confound her with Horace's fickle lady. The singer in this book names himself as Lygdamus, and his comparatively cold, prosaic verse has not at all the atmosphere of Tibullus's. Yet in the fifth elegy this singer also, lying fever-stricken and hopeless, sends a dying greeting to his absent friends. The words, a close echo of a Virgilian line, are :

Iii., 5, 31. Æneid, iii., 493.

"Live, in happiness live : yet of us be not wholly unmindful."

The fourth book, finally, opening with a tasteless and wearisome panegyric on Messalla in more than two hundred stiff hexameters—which may be credited to Lygdamus, or yet another hand—is thereafter devoted, in brief, earnest, and apparently sincere elegiac flights, to the love-affairs of the lady Sulpicia. Messalla's sister was married to a Sulpicius, and it is naturally surmised that this was their daughter. Her lover is here named Cerinthus. Half a dozen very brief poems are believed to be actually her composition, possibly even real letters, as their form implies. The strong, simple and artless feeling struggles against the fetters of verse. The longer and more artistic poems, in which her story is told more objectively, may well be from Tibullus's hand, though undoubtedly there were numberless other graceful versifiers of the day, who to us will never even be names. All these four volumes are usually printed and cited as Tibullus's.

Book IV., 7-12.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

An extremely convenient single volume of the Teubner series contains all Catullus, Tibullus, Propertius, with the scanty fragments of many lost lyric poets. An attractive little annotated edition by G. G. Ramsay contains quite as much of Tibullus and Propertius as any undergraduate Latin course should include.

Both of these poets are translated, essentially entire, in fluent, rather free, rhymed verse by James Cranstoun.

CHAPTER XXVI

THE AFTERMATH

PROPERTIUS is supposed to have been several years older than Ovid, and Tibullus was born somewhat earlier yet. Ovid outlived Augustus, but had at least seen Virgil. So all these authors form a single group, and the arrangement here adopted is simply a *diminuendo* of ever-lessening importance, from Virgil to Sulpicia.

Clearly it is an age of verse, though not of lofty poetic ideals. Drama is quite dead, if indeed it had ever been, in the Roman world, a living force. Epic, which should also have a national character, never again reached a success to be compared, even, to the Æneid. As to lyric we must point chiefly to Horace, though we are hardly assured that a single composition of his, save the official "Carmen Sæculare," was ever sung in Roman streets or homes. It is a curious fact, if literally true, that Lucretius, even, but not Horace, is represented among the *graffiti* or scrawled pencillings on the walls of Pompeii. Even Catullus, so far as we know, only "*scribbled* verses," and copied them for his friends, without music.

The happy Greek union of music and rhythmic utterance was perhaps never attained on Latian soil. Indeed our own unfortunate association of "literature" with the written letter, not with the living, breathing utterance, is at least partly chargeable to imperial Rome. Yet even uncongenial Horace and Propertius met to listen to, and compliment, each the other's recitations, while most of our "singers" never even heard their own madrigals and canzoni uttered aloud.

The verses of many other Augustan poets come to us, no doubt, in the Virgilian Appendix, the Latin Anthology, the coarse sportive "Priapeia," etc. The thankless task of cataloguing the forgotten names is largely done for us by Ovid in a Pontic epistle, wherein thirty are mentioned. Gallus was necessarily discussed here, as Virgil's friend. Another was Varius, who reverently edited and published the "Æneis." We might welcome to the light his courtly epics on Julius and Octavian, hardly his tragedy on Thyestes.

Pontica, iv., 16.

Supra, pp. 163, 166, 216

The dull poem of Grattius on Hunting, "Cynegetica," in five hundred and forty-one hexameters, must represent the didactic poetry of the age. The extreme of frivolity and coarseness, on the other hand, is attained in the "Priapeia," dedicated to the shamelessly nude garden-god who was supposed to scare the birds and punish thieves. The eighty brief poems of this group extant belong largely to the age of Augustus. Most of them are in hendecasyllables or iambics. Some are witty, a very few are even proper.

The only prose work that could be seriously mentioned with Livy's was the Universal History of Pompeius Trogus, in forty-four books. This we can now read in the still copious abridgment of Justinus. The title, "Historiæ Philippicæ," has an un-Roman sound. In fact, the history of the fatherland is treated in a strangely episodic and sketchy fashion. Macedonia is the artistic centre-piece. The work bears all the marks of a rather close translation, in the main, from a Greek original, with hasty additions which prove the poor claim of the Latin editor to mastery over the materials he has "conveyed." That no proper acknowledgment is made to the writer of the abler original composition is quite in accordance with both Greek and Latin usage. Several lost historical works have been mentioned already.

Oratory, in the nobler Ciceronian sense, was, of course, made all but impossible by the loss of freedom. No real senatorial debate or popular appeal is tolerated by an autocrat. Yet the law-courts still permitted a quiet, honorable career. Occasionally, no doubt, there might yet be heard an eloquent funeral oration, or even a manly panegyric on a living man by such a sturdy spirit as Messalla, who tendered to Augustus the title Cicero had craved: *pater patriæ*. The fragments of Augustan eloquence that reach us we mainly owe to the elder Seneca, who, in extreme old age, relying upon his phenomenal memory, recorded, in a sort of prose anthology, the "Oratorum et Rhetorum Sententiæ." Whether the many citations are absolutely accurate we can never know. In comparison with them, Seneca's own discussion of rhetorical method is of minor value.

The librarian and encyclopædist Julius Hyginus was a very inadequate successor to the great Varro. Perhaps his numerous writings are all lost. Two extant prose works of value bear his name, but the Latin is hardly worthy of the Augustan epoch. The Astronomy is of importance both directly and for the myths and astrological lore woven into the theme. The other book is a hand-book of mythology, and preserves many variations on the legends which would else be unknown to us.

Vitruvius Pollio is a really learned specialist. His book, "De Architectura Libri X," written in extreme old age and broken health, about 16–13 B.C., must be held constantly in hand, and seriously reckoned with, by every earnest student of classical construction and engineering. We are disposed to accept his claim, that he was the only Roman author who brought together all the various branches of his art. The magnificent remains of Roman baths, aqueducts, etc., make this volume doubly important. Often he is criti-

cising the work of more prominent architects than himself. He treats also such subjects as construction of derricks, military engines, etc. Here the loss of his drawings is especially deplorable.

Vitruvius cites many Greek authors, and no doubt consulted them either directly or in compendia. The burning question of classical archæology, whether the fifth-century Greeks had an elevated stage in their theatres, has been made to turn largely on the decision whether Vitruvius is on such a problem a competent witness, or could have confused early Greek with contemporary Roman construction.

Vitruvius's language, technical on the one side and colloquial on the other, diverges widely from the rhetorical, semi-poetic elegance of Livy or Tacitus. His style is straightforward and usually clear, though, as he himself foresaw, it is not easy for such "abstruse matters to be lucidly set forth in writing."

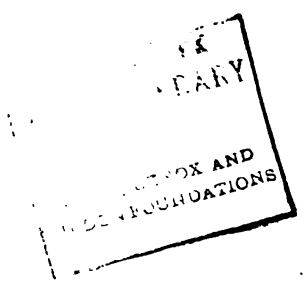
Least of all can we credit anything like literary quality to the lexicographer and school-master Verrius Flaccus, tutor of Augustus's short-lived grandsons. His grammatical and archæological essays are quite lost. His great lexicon, entitled "De Verborum Significatu," is sadly tattered, and what is left is oftener accredited to the later abbreviator Festus, who showed his scholarly quality largely by *omitting the wholly obsolete* words, and Flaccus' explanation of them!

The barrenness of the later Augustan prose has been quite sufficiently exemplified. It is abundantly clear that it was an age of poetry, of elegance in form, of easy morals and rather frivolous tastes. High above their time tower only Virgil and Livy.



AUGUSTUS.

Antique bust in the Capitoline Museum.


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BIBLIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

Hardly anything mentioned in this chapter need be laid before the youthful student. On the curious and fruitful subject of the *graffiti* there is a brief illustrated article in the Harper Dictionary of Antiquities, and specimens in Peck and Arrowsmith's "Roman Life in Latin Prose and Verse." Mature scholars will turn to Volume IV. of the "Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum."

Grattius or Gratius may be cursorily perused in Bährens's "Poetæ Latini Minores," Vol. I., pp. 31–53. The Priapeia may also be found in Bährens, Vol. I., in Bücheler's Petronius, or in Lucian Müller's text of the elegiac poets mentioned above. The text of Hyginus should be accessible for reference in any discussion on mythological subjects. Seneca's important book is included in the beautifully printed *Bibliotheca* series of Schenkl (Leipsic and Prague). The chief edition of Vitruvius is by Rose, Leipsic, 1867. There is a useful German translation with notes by Reber. See also Terquem, "La Science Romaine à l'époque d' Auguste."

43 B.C.–14 A.D.

B.C.	*Political Events.*	B.C.	*Literary Events.*
43	Second triumvirate. The proscriptions.	43	Cicero's Philippics, V.–XIV. Murder of Cicero. Sallust's Catiline. Birth of Ovid.
42	Battle of Philippi. Defeat and death of Brutus and Cassius. Meeting of Cleopatra with Antony.	42	Horace fought at Philippi.
		42–39	Virgil's Bucolics.
41	Perusian war. Antony's wife Fulvia and his brother oppose Augustus.	41	Virgil, Horace, and Propertius lose their estates in the division of lands among the veterans.
40	Death of Fulvia. Reconciliation of triumvirs. Antony marries Octavia.		
		39	Asinius Pollio founds a library, and introduces public readings by authors. Horace presents Virgil to Mæcenas.
		37	Varro at eighty writes his "De Re Rustica."
36	Lepidus expelled from triumvirate. Mæcenas regent in Octavian's absence.		
		35	Horace's first book of Satires. Death of Sallust.
33	Final rupture of Octavian and Antony.		
		32	Death of Atticus.
31	Battle of Actium. Mæcenas and Agrippa regents.	31	Horace's Epodes.
30	Death of Cleopatra and Antony.	30	Horace's second book of Satires.
29	Triple triumph of Augustus. Temple of Janus closed.	29 (?)	Publication of Virgil's Georgics.
		28	Death of Varro.

Political Events.		*Literary Events.*	
B.C.		B.C.	
27	Octavian receives title of Augustus, and powers of tribune, consul, pontifex, and imperator. Formal creation of the empire.		
		26	Death of Gallus.
		23	Horace's Odes, I.–III.
20	Parthians surrender standards captured from Crassus.	20	Horace's Epistles, Book I.
19	*Herod rebuilds the temple at Jerusalem.*	19	Death of Virgil. Death of Tibullus.
		19–14	Horace's Epistles, Book III.
17	Secular games celebrated.	17	Horace composes the "Carmen Sæculare."
		16–13	Vitruvius composes his work on architecture.
		15	Death of Propertius.
		13	Horace's Odes, Book IV.
11–9	German campaigns and death of Drusus.		
		9	Ovid's Amores.
		8	Death of Mæcenas and Horace.
		7	Birth of Seneca.
6–4	Tiberius in retirement at Rhodes		
	4 (B.C.) BIRTH OF JESUS.		
		1 (?)	Ovid's Art of Love.
A.D.		A.D.	
4	Augustus adopts Tiberius.		
4–6	Tiberius's campaigns in Germany.		
8	Banishment of the younger Julia.	8	Banishment of Ovid.
9	Defeat of Varus and destruction of his legions by Hermann.		
12	Tiberius triumphs over the Illyrians.		
14	Census taken. 4,197,000 citizens. Death of Augustus, at Nola in Campania, August 19th.		

BOOK IV

THE AGE OF SILVER LATIN

(14 A.D.–120 A.D.)

CHAPTER XXVII

THE EARLY EMPIRE

It is not at all unusual to close a political history of the Romans with the accession of Octavian to official supremacy. This would be absurd in the story of their literature, since the early Augustan group is the most brilliant of any. With Ovid, however, at the latest, we leave behind all who had been born and bred in the air of freedom.

Yet even here it is hard to pause. Deathlike as is the sombre reign of Tiberius, he himself, with his nephew Germanicus, the popular idol, and his evil genius Sejanus, are etched for us nearly a century later, in imperishable outlines, by Tacitus, master of the most original and effective style in Latin literature. To Tacitus, at least, our tale must run without decisive break. Yet Tiberius's jealousy toward all eminent capacity, his covert resentment even when earlier Romans were eulogized, the growth of the professional informers (*delatores*), the paralysis of all free utterance or activity of any kind, left to the noblest spirits no choice save stoical endurance of life or deliberate suicide. When such a man could fill out his quarter-century of power, exerted chiefly *in absentia*, die a natural death, and transmit his sceptre to an untried kinsman—the life of his people as a whole is effete indeed. Tiberius had been, at least, a gallant leader of Augustus's armies. His successors had no claim to respect save their Julian blood, or adoption.

Octavian's control had been eagerly welcomed, at first, as the only hope of escape from interminable civic strife. His firm-held power was in some degree concealed behind

old forms and offices still retained. The accession of his heir first made perfectly clear that the world was under the feet of an hereditary dynasty. We are disposed to remember Augustus as the genial, middle-aged patron and comrade of the great poets, as the secure and contented *pater patriæ*. But he was embittered by the frequent plots against his life, and grew in old age suspicious, arbitrary, violent, so that the tale of his last years too often reminds us of the cold, long-headed boy, Octavian, who had profited by the proscriptions, without accepting the chief odium from them.

As for the four kinsmen who succeeded him, the merciless judgments and biting rhetoric of Tacitus, Seneca, Juvenal, may have unduly colored our opinions, but it seems only charitable to believe that not one of them was fully sane. Possibly the lonely and dangerous eminence of the imperial throne made some form of madness almost inevitable. More probably licentiousness, and indulgence generally, had left a brand on the whole Julian line. There is, of course, a wide diversity, from the lonely and deadly silence of Tiberius to the feverish versatility of Nero, yet the whole effect of their rule was oppressive, nay destructive, to anything like brilliant talent, or illustrious character, among their obsequious subjects. Each of them, like Julius and Augustus, had some literary gift or taste. This only fanned the flame of their murderous jealousy.

Tiberius, 14–37 A.D.
Caligula, 37–41 A.D.
Claudius, 41–54 A.D.
Nero, 54–68 A.D.

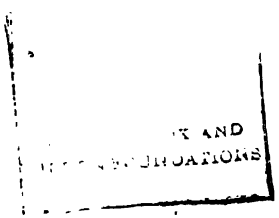
Nero's excesses filled the cup of Roman, even of provincial patience. The revolutionary discovery, that an emperor could be created far from Rome, was suddenly made. Vespasian, the eventual outcome from the anarchy of 68–69 A.D., and yet more his noble son, Titus, who ruled both with and after him, seemed to have

Tacitus, Histories, I., 4.
68–69 A.D. Galba, Otho, Vitellius, crowned and slain.



NERO'S LIVING TORCHES.

By Siemiradzki.


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established a saner and humaner dynasty. Yet Domitian, reigning longer than his father and brother combined, rivalled Caligula or Nero in demoniacal cruelty, and deadly hatred of all noble distinction. It was after his reign, not Nero's, that gentle Pliny, drawing a free breath, exclaimed: "At last men come through merit to honor, not into peril, as heretofore." Tacitus, as was his nature, speaks far more bitterly in his "Agricola."

Vespasian, 69–79 A.D.
Titus, 79–81 A.D.
Domitian, 81–96 A.D.

Whatever we may believe as to the effect of paternal despotism upon the career of a Virgil or a Tibullus, this first century of our era as a whole could not but be destructive of all healthy intellectual or artistic energy. Its real effects are perhaps best seen in the next epoch, when the strong and wise rule of the five good emperors could not save their realm from steady decay. In that age, too, the utter collapse of literature is especially evident.

96–180 A.D.

Other large causes were clearly hastening the decline. What we call Latin literature had always been largely Greek in its sources, models, and spirit. The inspiration of the old myths was now at last exhausted. Freely travestied in Rome so early as Plautus, vulgarized even in Ovid's artistic hands, the Olympic gods had lost all power over men's hearts and minds. Almost any strange Asiatic cult was accepted or tolerated, since all were alike half-disdained by the rulers of the world. Indeed, the final struggle of Roman paganism against Roman Christianity was led by Isis and Mithra rather than by Pallas and Apollo.

In the crowded, luxurious, and brutalized metropolis, every form of self-indulgence seemed to grow swiftly stale. From Seneca to Juvenal and Tacitus, the writers of the so-called Silver Age are in one respect nearly all alike, and strikingly diverse from Ovid: they are aware that their

environment is ignoble: and while they are disillusionized as to the present, they are hopeless as to the future.

The age of Silver Latin can hardly be defined with exactness. Cicero and Livy, Lucretius and Virgil, are by universal consent the largest or loftiest figures of Latin literature. After them there is a distinct gap, then a flickering revival which culminates in Tacitus's generation. Yet as a whole this is a darkening day, and no real development is possible. Even the cleverest authors, as we have seen already in Statius's case, cast their eyes backward toward masters whom they do not hope to rival.

14–117 A.D. (?)

Supra, p. 156

Already we are tempted to treat each life as an isolated study. Our groups must often be merely made up of writers whom the chance of birth alone brought into the same decades, or into a particular reign. Disintegration is a sign of death, if not death itself. Brilliant talent, ay, genius, may yet appear: Tacitus, or even Apuleius, may claim the prouder title: but the general life of the spirit perishes with the national aspiration and hope.

We may perhaps best divide the first century A.D. into the conventional "three generations." The first carries us almost to Tiberius's death, the second to the fall of the Julian line with Nero. The first period, by its extreme poverty of intellectual genius, forms the gap just mentioned between the Gold and the Silver Age. Ovid at his departure from Rome left there no author whom we can account important. The whole story of Tiberius's decades will occupy us but a page or two.

37 A.D.
68 A.D.

AUTHORS OF TIBERIUS'S TIME.

Celsus's treatise on Medicine, in eight books, is a surviving section of an encyclopædia, entitled "Artes," which once included philosophy, rhetoric, law, the military art, and even began (Books I.–V.) with

Books VI. to XIII.

agriculture. The compiler follows the great Greek physician Hippocrates, and other good models; his Latin is pure and clear; the chance of survival makes the book our main authority for the entire Roman period, indeed for the whole time since Hippocrates, on medical practice; but the subject is of course technical, not of general interest. Indeed, it seems probable that Celsus was himself a specialist in medicine.

450 B.C.

Of the writers sometimes represented in our schoolbooks, Valerius Maximus is a tasteless and witless collector of anecdotes, to which his vanity, and fulsome eulogy of the emperor, make no desirable addition. Velleius Paterculus is no less servile, and his brief compendium of Roman history, in two books only, with its stilted rhetoric and pompous style, seems wearisomely long. The elder Seneca, already mentioned, probably made the actual written records, from his marvellous memory, in Tiberius's time.

With Phædrus, the sprightly versifier of fables, we hardly pass over into the realm of poetry. Beginning as a mere paraphraser of Æsop, he claims for himself more and more originality, even a lofty rank among the immortal bards of Rome. We can hardly give him more than a modest place among juvenile classics, at best. Yet there is actually but one other writer of verse to be mentioned—and the name itself is extremely doubtful, the author's life utterly unknown, while the assignment to Tiberius's reign is merely due to certain passages which point to that time.

M. Manilius, also named in our MSS. as Malius or Mallius, of unknown age or birth, is the composer of an astronomical, or rather astrological, poem, in five books. The subject has recurred already both in Greek and in Latin: yet the poet has some justification when he claims to be a pioneer. In bold and lofty speculation, in the consciousness of grave difficulties to surmount, in its rugged style, in the picturesqueness of certain episodes, in occasional

tenderness, finally even by its unfinished condition and imperfect transmission, the poem reminds us of Lucretius's, which it, however, as a whole nowise equals. Sometimes Manilius corrects Lucretius's scientific fallacies, or assails the philosophic errors of earlier times, *e.g.*, the notion that the seas are a divinely appointed barrier between nations.

Especially do we welcome this poet's earnest theism. In some passages he states strongly the pantheistic notions which Lucretius approaches, as it were, despite himself. The immortality of the human soul seems to him no less evident.

Cf. supra, p. 130.

iv., 886-87. "Is there a doubt that a god within our breast has a dwelling,
Or that souls of men returning attain unto Heaven?"

His doctrines are essentially Stoic. Especially is his fatalism prominent.

"Destiny ruleth the world: by fixt law all is appointed."

We may foresee our doom in the stars, but we can nowise modify or evade it. Only in knowledge may man approach divinity, not in power. The note of repining is not lacking.

"Ever we plan to begin our life, but never are living."

Altogether this poem, not once mentioned by any ancient author, deserves to be better known. But again, as at Cicero's advent, we must turn suddenly from obscure half-forgotten names to a career which fills, and seems to dominate, a whole generation.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Manilius is so little known to American scholars, that the still useful and accessible critical edition of Jacob (Reimer, Berlin, 1846), may be mentioned here.

CHAPTER XXVIII

SENECA

3 B.C.–A.D. 65.

ONCE again the new impulse in Latin letters comes from another land. The elder Seneca was born in Cordova, where a house is still pointed out as his. Thither he was fond of retiring, especially toward the close of his long life. His three sons have all, in different degrees, an interest for us. The eldest, adopted by his father's friend, was that ruler of Achaia who looked on, with truly Roman contempt, while a mob of Greeks beat the "chief ruler of the synagogue" in Corinth, and again when the Jews attempted to arraign Paul for heresy before the governor's seat of judgment. "Gallio cared for none of these things," says the chronicler: and by this disregard for the quarrels of subject races, forgotten by him in a day, "careless Gallio's" name has come down to us as a byword. Yet his famous kinsman left for him this epitaph: "No mortal was ever so sweet to anyone as he was to all men." The youngest brother, Mela, was the father of the poet Lucan, and was dragged down to ruin with his son when that young life came to its cowardly end.

N. T., Acts, xviii., 17.

The far more famous second brother, Lucius Annæus Seneca, was born like his father at Cordova, but educated in Rome. He also spent some time in Egypt, of which his aunt's husband, Pollio, was governor. Though carefully trained in the rhetorical studies of his father, he showed a strong preference for philosophy, including natural science, but especially ethics. In fact, he is so clearly a preacher,

that we cannot wonder at the baseless legend, that he was the personal friend and correspondent of the apostle Paul.

Distinguished ability like Seneca's would suffice to make him the target of the professional informers. Under Caligula he was saved from condemnation, for the crimes of excessive wealth and eloquence, only on the plea that he was already marked for early death by consumption.

41 B.C. In Claudius's time he was again accused, and exiled to Corsica. The charge, that he was a lover of the princess Julia Livilla, Caligula's sister, we need not believe.

Seneca was suddenly recalled, given the office of prætor, and made tutor of the young Nero. This swift rise

49 A.D. seems clearly a part of the schemes of the ambitious Agrippina, who just at this time succeeds as empress the notorious and ill-fated Messalina. The adoption, by the emperor, of his stepson Nero soon followed. In the murder of Claudius by his wife Seneca need not have been an accessory: but he debased his genius to unseemly ridicule on the dead ruler, lauded his murderers, and shared their gains.

The most dreadful of all the family tragedies in the doomed house, however, was the elaborately planned de-

59 A.D. struction of Agrippina by the unnatural son for whom she had made every possible sacrifice. This fearful deed Seneca at least condoned, even defended as a political necessity.

Presently he realized that his enormous wealth, and unwise display, were endangering his own life. Offering straightway all his fortune as a gift to his young master, he attempted to retire to Spain. It was too late. Entangled in flimsy charges of treason, such as were now always at the

65 A.D. tyrant's command, he was bidden to end his life. This he did with the promptness of a true Roman, even with the philosophic dignity of a Socrates.

It was an example which Nero himself, a few years later, ignobly failed to follow.

Such a life makes us understand better, why the choicest spirits of the age usually preferred a self-inflicted death. It opens a glimpse at the conditions of government by a despot under the sway of Greek freedmen, unprincipled women, and professional informers. But above all, it shows some of the temptations which ensnared a nature not wholly unfit to stand beside Cicero: for like him Seneca was ambitious, vacillating, patriotic; quite as tender, and truer to the closest home-ties, humane and loving to slaves; gifted, also, with unlimited power of fluent and pleasing utterance.

Seneca is the most brilliant expositor of Stoic philosophy. He expresses high regard, too, for the Cynics, who may be called the logical *reductio ad absurdum* of Stoicism, for they preach not merely temperate self-denial but the seclusion of a hermit or a stylite. Nay, this tolerant schoolman realized, that even Epicuros, with his purest disciples, under another name and by a different path, had reached nearly the same ethical goal. Like Plato, he is disposed to regard this life as an exile and imprisonment of the erring soul. Seneca, therefore, naturally, hopes for an immortal future life of the soul: though this, or any other reward of virtue, is no cardinal doctrine of Stoicism. Epictetos and Marcus Aurelius, for instance, barely allude to such a prospect as possible. Here again we see how close Seneca comes to the apostolic teachings of his time.

"Why some troubles befall good men, though there be a Providence."

"On tranquillity of spirit."

"That a wise man can suffer neither injury nor disgrace."

"To my mother Helvia, on consolation."

These are certainly very natural theses for a moral philosopher in the first century. Twelve extended discourses

on such themes make up the "Dialogues": ill-named, for Seneca's tendency to monologue is even more marked than Cicero's. The discourse addressed to an heroic and bereft woman, Marcia, is also entitled "De Consolatione." But a third time the title appears, when Polybios, a villanous freedman and intriguer of the imperial court, has lost a brother. Here both creature and master are skilfully flattered, and Seneca's own desire for pardon is delicately touched.

"In order that the tears of those who are in peril, and would fain attain the mercy of most clement Cæsar, may be dried, you must needs dry your own. . . . He did not cast me down, but when I was assailed by fortune, and falling, he upheld me. He granted, nay begged for my life. It is my chief comfort in misery to see his mercy traverse all the world. . . . He best knows the time when he should rescue each. . . . Well may you know these thunderbolts to be most just, which even they who are stricken adore."

The seven books on natural science—which is marked off in three cosmic zones, astronomy, meteorology and geography—had great influence in the Middle Ages, though now, of course, little more than a storehouse of curious guesses. This is almost the only large work of Seneca's which we can fairly call secular, and even here he would have us view nature always as the clear and orderly handiwork of deity. He has, like other Stoics, a high and pure conception of the supreme "Artifex."

The no less extended work "On Benefits" contains much of interest. In Book III., especially, pathetic examples of devotion shown by slaves to their masters are brought together. Such teachings of human equality may really have been quickened, even without Seneca's own knowledge, by the apostolic teachings: but also by the terrible social conditions which all but made every Roman an abject and trembling slave.

Yet, since the briefest sermons are often the best, we find it easier to enjoy Seneca's so-called "Letters," collected in the twenty books "Ad Lucilium." We need not envy Gellius, who read twenty-two books at least. Yet every wide-ranging Latinist, student of ethics, or even of style, should dip deeply—it matters little just where—into these mature reflections on life. Wherever he opens, he will be struck by a happy phrase. In the brevity, rapidity, and ostentatious simplicity of the sentence he may be reminded, at first, of Emerson. *E.g.*,

"The way is safe, is pleasant, is one for which nature has fitted thee. She has given thee that, which if thou neglect not thou shalt rise to the god's level. But not money shall make thee god-like: the god hath nothing. The robe will not make thee so: the god is naked. Fame, or display, or knowledge of thy name spread among the nations will not avail: the god no one hath known. Many think ill of him: and are not punished."

Epist., 31, §§ 9–10.

Yet slowly, surely, our enthusiasm flags. Just why, cannot be so briefly told. In the first place, as Quintilian sternly declares, the style itself is an essentially perverse one, and even in a master's hand it can beguile us for a time, but not hold us captive forever. Emerson's eye is fixed on a real and living image: his words are the fittest and simplest by which it can be swiftly set before us. Or, he divines deep currents, even an ocean, of truth undiscovered, and his keen, cold, flashing phrase lights us, at least, as far as our eager vision can follow his. But Seneca loves the phrase for itself. He culls words as a lady gathers bright flowers and matches their tints. Sometimes the thought they convey is wise, helpful, original. Quite as often, under the waving plumes and polished visor of his rhetoric, peep out the homely features of a trite commonplace or even a childish truism. *E.g.* "For those who voyage this sea, tempestuous

Quint., x., 1, 129.

and exposed to all changes of weather, there is no port, save that of death." Emerson's sentences challenge us to expand them into paragraphs. Seneca's pages we can always condense without loss.

Again, the moral application is too insistent, the preacher's tone too strident. We cannot forget what his own life was. The sermon just quoted continues: "The mob of slaves avails not, tha bear thy litter on journeys through town and field." We recall, that Seneca's retinue was all but imperial. This advocate of contentment in poverty was the richest of courtiers. He bade his disciples live, as Emerson said to Thoreau, in one-room cabins, but he entertained them at five hundred tables glorious in cedar and ivory. All this, indeed, he frankly confesses, bidding men follow his precept, not his example.

Seneca's taste is hardly as florid and highly colored as that of his century generally. Perhaps we ought not to emphasize the passages where, in detailing the excesses of Julia or the unnatural vices of the age, he seems, like Juvenal, to take a morbid interest in the very sins that he condemns.

The blackest shadows on this strange, tragic, splendid life have already been indicated. The portrait statue that usually bears his name is, like most, of doubtful authenticity. Yet the general voice insists on its fitness. The furrowed brow has other lines than those of age and thought. Out of the eyes gazes a hunted, a horrified, if not a lost soul. It reminds us of the phrase in which the greatest of evangelists uttered the awful doubt lest, while he pointed out for others the heavenward path, he himself might "become a castaway."

Yet there are numberless happy turns to be learned from Seneca's style. If not whole sermons, much less entire volumes, are to be treasured, yet hundreds of sentences might well be utilized by our Latin instructors who cast about so



SO-CALLED SENECA.

Antique bronze bust from Herculaneum, now in Naples Museum.


ASTOR, LENOX AND
TILDEN FOUNDATIONS

hopelessly in quest of classical material fit for childish eyes. While Seneca loved power, glory, splendor, and sacrificed for them his lasting good name and present peace of mind, yet in an age of betrayal and ghastly selfishness he appears steadfast to all ties of intimate friendship or family love. At the worst, his example has long since ceased to be harmful. Much of his ethical teaching has been fittingly adopted, even by popes and church councils, as at least sharing largely the authority of Christian dogma.

The works already mentioned now fill over a thousand solid Teubner pages. Yet a long list of his lost moral treatises is represented by titles and citations in later writers, especially in great Christian authors like Lactantius, Tertullian, Jerome, and Augustine. We turn to a most curious work also ascribed, but with less certainty, to Nero's tutor. It is probably the best extant example of the Menippean satire, in deftly mingled prose and verse, for which Varro was especially famous.

THE SATIRE ON CLAUDIUS.

A prosy Greek chronicler mentions a satire of Seneca on Claudius's death, called "Apokolokyntosis" instead of "Apotheosis." We may render "Pumpkinification," or "Reception of Claudius among the Gourds." Among the extant works is a most clever, imaginative and ungracious extravaganza, upon this very subject. Claudius arrives on Olympus, misshapen, halting, mumbling, as in life. Even the wide-wandering Heracles cannot identify the newcomer. His sole escort, Fever, finally makes him known. His admission is seriously considered, but finally denied after an eloquent denunciation of his murders and other crimes, uttered by his own grandfather Augustus.

Passing downward toward Hades, Claudius is pleased to see his own funeral in the Via Sacra. We hear the dirge,

made up in Aristophanic fashion of sincere praise, *e.g.*, for his victories in Britain, mingled with ridicule:

> "Mourn for the hero
> Than whom more swiftly
> Never another
> Could settle a lawsuit,
> Hearing but one side,
> —Frequently neither!"

The tale ends in a confused fashion. In the under-world Claudius is twice sentenced: once to dice forever with a bottomless box, and again to be the slave and drudge of a freedman.

But of transformation into a gourd there is no hint. Some ingenious editors think this was still a third doom now lost from our MSS.; or, that Seneca wrote two distinct satires after Claudius's death; or, yet again, that this heartless skit is not from Seneca's hand at all. There is, however, little doubt as to the authorship.

While the dead Claudius is thus loaded with every conceivable insult, Nero is hailed as the harbinger of a golden age. Apollo is introduced prophesying to the Fates:

> "He shall transcend the years of mortal life,
> Like me in face and beauty, nor in song
> And eloquence inferior. He shall bring
> A happy age to wearied men, and end
> The silence of the laws."

The treatise on Clemency, in three books, with which the philosopher hailed his pupil's succession to imperial power, expresses much the same high hopes. Indeed, the first years of Nero's reign threw credit on himself and on his Mentor. How bitterly Seneca, as well as the rest of the world, was later undeceived, need not be repeated.

THE LATIN TRAGEDIES.

After all that has been said as to the steady degradation of the Roman theatre, it is surprising to find, in the age of Nero, and included among the works of Seneca, the only serious Latin dramas that have survived.

Of these, one is doubly interesting, since the scene is laid in Nero's palace, and in the year 62 A.D. The real subject is the utter downfall of the Julian house. The central figure is Octavia, daughter of Claudius, the unwilling and unhonored wife of the tyrant. In her opening soliloquy, in the following scenes with her nurse and, later, with a sympathizing chorus, are rehearsed the murders of her father and of her young brother, Britannicus, and all the horrors of the situation.

In the next scene appears Seneca, who soliloquizes at much length and learning on the progressive wickedness of mankind ever since the golden age.

> "But lo, with startled step and savage look
> Comes Nero. What he plans I dread to hear."

The despot as he enters is uttering an order for executions.

Seneca in single lines preaches mercy.

Seneca: Rashly to harm our neighbors is unseemly.
Nero: Easily is he just who hath no fears.
Seneca: A mighty cure for fright is clemency.
Nero: A king's chief merit is to slay his foes.
Seneca: A greater is to save the citizens.
Nero: By gentle old men children should be trained.
Seneca: Rather should eager youth be ruled by them.
Nero: My present age, methinks, is wise enough.

The emperor presently announces that he will divorce Octavia, and marry her favored rival.

This scene is the calmest in the play. Later, the angry ghost of Nero's mother rises to curse him and his. The new queen, Poppæa, appears, with her own nurse, confidante, and even a rival chorus. The people are reported as rising in Octavia's favor, but this only draws from Nero the order for her banishment to a lonely island and her prompt execution there.

The plot follows closely the tradition of the real events. There is action enough, and some sympathy for Octavia is aroused. The style, though over-rhetorical, is sufficiently clear and rapid. The various metrical forms of Greek tragedy are very fairly imitated.

The speeches and choral odes are extremely long, and in general the play is declamatory. Its fatal defect is the utter lack of any noble action or character, any large poetic beauty, to reward us for enduring its harrowing scenes. Yet it is better than we should expect. This is the one surviving example in Latin of the *prætexta* or native tragedy. We do not know that it was ever played, though it could perfectly well be performed.

Agrippina's wraith prophesies her son's "shameful flight," and adds:

> "The day shall come when he repays his crimes
> With forfeit life, offers his throat to foes,
> Deserted, overthrown, bereft of all."

These definite touches make clear that the play, or certainly this scene, was written after Nero's death. This is the chief and evidently the sufficient objection to accepting it as Seneca's work.

It is impossible to discuss in detail the nine other tragedies, which are all on Greek themes. In most cases we have extant Attic dramas on the same subjects, and the comparison is disastrous to the Latin works. Yet they are not servile copies, nor are they lacking

in power. Everything else, however, seems sacrificed to the creation of long declamatory harangues. Of character-study, of poetic atmosphere, there is little indeed. The authorship of Seneca seems fully defended by the many close parallels with his prose works, especially the nuggets of Stoic philosophy on fate, resignation, suicide, and other favorite themes. Even Seneca's peculiar trick of elaborated brevity reappears here. Nothing that can harrow our feelings is neglected. Medea even breaks Horace's explicit command, and slays her children before our eyes.

Medea, vss. 1001–19. Horace, de Arte Poetica, vs. 185.

The "Hercules Mad," and the "Medea," imitate the plots of Euripides. The "Phædra" follows rather his first draught of the "Hippolytos" than our extant play, in which the Attic poet removed the coarser traits of Phædra's character, and made a scapegoat of her nurse. The "Trojan Women" utilizes parts of the Euripidean play of the same name, but also of the "Hecuba." The "Œdipus Rex" of Sophocles, the "Agamemnon" of Aischylos, are no less clearly Seneca's originals. The long "Hercules on Mount Œta" overruns the limits of Sophocles's "Trachinians." The horrible myth of Thyestes, beguiled into devouring his children's flesh, is not treated in any extant Greek play, and few will care to study it here. The "Phœnissæ," finally, is a mere pair of fragments which could hardly have been included in one play, and may well be mere studies, never completed. The purest heroine of Attic drama, Antigone, appears in both: sadly travestied, though with the best intent.

These plays, also, could be put upon the stage. The division into five acts, the indication of the scene, the limitation to three speakers, are fairly observed. But the popular taste under Nero would infinitely prefer a mime, not to mention a procession, a circus, or a gladiatorial con-

test. A small obsequious circle of the court may have applauded them, in the days before Seneca's headlong fall from favor. In later Latin literature, but especially in Racine or Corneille, their influence is seen. It is safe to say that our age will never revive them.

The silence of Quintilian as to Seneca's tragedies is certainly remarkable, as he seems to be giving something like a hasty resumé of his various labors: "He treated nearly every form of literary material, for orations, poems, letters, and dialogues of his are in circulation." It may be just possible that the dramas are curtly included under "poems," or that they were not precisely "in circulation" (*feruntur*). Yet a distinct mention of them here would give the final assurance, which is still lacking, of their authenticity.

Quintilian, x., 1., § 129.

That tragedies were still acted in public we know, chiefly from the curious fortunes of Pomponius Secundus, who is warmly praised by Quintilian, and no less by Tacitus. The latter assures him of lasting fame for his dramas, rather than for his notable victory and triumph over the German Chatti. Popular insolence to this noble author, and to eminent ladies, in the theatre, was the occasion for severe edicts issued by Claudius. Yet of his patriotic drama "Æneas" the name is barely rescued for us, while as to plays on Greek themes, written by Pomponius, even the titles are questioned. Some readers may be consoled for this loss by the statement that he, like Seneca, often devoted his prologues to the discussion of burning questions in propriety of diction.

Quintil., x., 1., § 98.

Tacitus, Annales, xii., 28.

Tacitus, Annales, xi., 13.

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Seneca is "easy" reading in Latin, and usually requires little annotation. The Teubner text in three volumes should be much more generally perused. Here may also be read the brief feeble and clearly

spurious correspondence of Paul and Seneca. (Vol. III., pp. 476–81.) The tragedies are edited separately, in most scholarly fashion, by Leo. The careful judgment on Seneca by Quintilian is a masterpiece of literary criticism.

The recent translation in the Bohn Library is carefully done, but is incomplete. The satire on Claudius's death has just been translated and edited, both excellently, by Ball in the Columbia University publications. Two of the tragedies, Medea and Troades, have recently been translated with vigor, accuracy, and taste, in verse, by Ella I. Harris (Houghton). Quite interesting is an early essay by Canon Farrar, which occupies the greater part of the volume called "Seekers after God," where it is combined with briefer studies of Marcus Aurelius and Epictetus.

CHAPTER XXIX

CONTEMPORARIES OF SENECA

COMPARED with this large and typical career, all the other authors of the time are minor figures. As to the literary work of the rulers we need hardly say a word, though Claudius was a devoted student and voluminous historian, who should never have been dragged from his books into the pitiless light that beats upon a throne. He even made a pedantic attempt to reform the Latin alphabet. His works have all perished, save a few inscriptions.

Claudius's father, the beloved Germanicus, has left us a metrical rendering of Aratos's Astronomy. It is a distinct improvement on Cicero's version. The boldest change is the omission of the dedication to Zeus, for whom is substituted the emperor, Tiberius.

The curious prominence of this subject in decadent Latin literature can be easily explained. The belief in the reading of the future in the stars had outlasted nearly every other form of living faith or superstition among the cultivated classes. Indeed, "tampering with the astrologers" was one of the commonest charges made by the informers, since the plots against the emperor's life were believed to be oftenest hidden under supposed prophecies. The capital was thronged with as many seers, astrologers, mages, of real or pretended Oriental birth, as it deserved.

In this age begins the systematic editing and annotating of those greater Latin authors who were already regarded as classics. In particular, M. Valerius Probus prepared careful editions, and biographies, of Terence, Lucretius, Virgil, Horace, and even of his contemporary, Persius.

There is extant only a brief but useful monograph of his on abbreviations, use of initial letters, etc. Asconius also made extended commentaries, based upon thorough historical study. On five Ciceronian speeches he still affords material aid. Cæsius Bassus, a poet whose verses are lost, left a treatise on metres, from which there are valuable fragments. Such secondary work indicates the consciousness that the creative age is closing. Pomponius Mela, writing in Claudius's reign, is the author of our oldest Latin treatise on geography, in three books. He complains, like Cicero before him, that the material resists rhetorical treatment.

Supra, p. 95.

More important than any of these is Columella, a Spaniard like Seneca, a native of Cadiz, who under Nero, in advanced years, wrote his truly encyclopædic work on Agriculture, in twelve books. The tenth, on gardening, is composed as a filial tribute to Virgil's genius, in accurate but uninspired hexameter verses. The rest is prose. Though cumbrous in plan, this voluminous work is a storehouse of information.

The chief historical essay preserved is Quintus Curtius's biography of Alexander the Great. This was apparently composed in Claudius's time, judging from a passage in which that emperor's accession seems to be described. Nothing is known of the author. The style is extremely pleasing. In his choice of scenes and subjects to present in detail Curtius is really artistic. As an historical document, the work is inferior to Arrian's somewhat later account in Greek. Of the ten books, only eight, III.–X., remain, somewhat tattered.

All these prose works indicate a prudent effort to select subjects so remote, colorless, or pacific that they cannot possibly be displeasing even to the most jealous imperial censorship. The next in our list, however, is nowise lacking in audacity, or in contemporary coloring.

PETRONIUS

The title "Satires of Petronius" really covers a single tale of travel and picaresque adventure, of the general type best known to us through "Gil Blas," or, perhaps, "Tom Jones." No modern author, however, would be permitted even to hint at actions and scenes such as are here fully delineated. From the romance in at least twenty books we have only meagre fragments, the chief of which describes a banquet given by a rich upstart, Trimalchio, and his equally vulgar wife, Fortunata. In all Latin literature there is nothing approaching the dramatic vividness, the wit, the uproarious mirthfulness, of this episode.

The youth Eucolpios, who is recording his experiences, though a freedman, is liberally educated, and uses the ornate Latin of the day, somewhat colored by poetic phrases and Greek words. Much of the talk among the guests is in the vulgar speech, full of racy old Latin idioms, or, again, of the latest slang. The tasteless splendor of the palace, the boastful hospitality of the hosts, the elaborate surprises provided for the guests as each course is served in most novel fashion, all make up an indescribable medley. It is clear, meantime, that all this wasteful confusion and babel is being set forth by a consummate artist, tolerant of all human weakness, deft and light even in his scorn, not unaware of the disdain with which a more reticent age must view both his pictures and himself. By many a quiet yet deadly stroke he seems in Trimalchio to be pillorying and immortalizing some real and hated parvenu.

The other fragments suffice to show that this scene was one of the relatively decent episodes of the entire work. On the whole we hardly know whether to deplore or rejoice over the loss of what may well have been the most vivid and merciless picture of debased humanity ever painted.

A character who appears rather late is a pretentious old poet, Eumolpos. Among the verses which he enables the satirist to introduce freely is a "Sack of Troy" in sixty-five hexameters, and a poem on the civil wars in two hundred and ninety-five verses. Despite an occasional roguish Virgilian parody or other lapse from dignity, these poems show more talent than most of the serious epic writing of the century. The overt intent to deride seems here again clear. The exact application of the artist's gibes can probably be pointed out.

Among the poetic attempts of Nero which have a prominent share in the tradition of his mad rule was a Trojan epic: recited, so runs the tale, while Rome was burning. As to Nero's boon-companion, poetic rival, and short-lived victim, Lucan, with the account of the civil wars in his "Pharsalia," we shall speak elsewhere. Various allusions to real persons indicate that Petronius's scene, and the author's actual life, are cast in Nero's days.

Infra, p. 260

Finally, near the close of Tacitus's annals, is found one of his most masterly character-sketches. Petronius Arbiter, equally famous for his gallantry and executive ability in active life, for his extravagant ingenuity in debauchery, and for his fearless, refined, and caustic wit, attained a dangerous eminence, and won his surname, in Nero's inmost circle, as *Arbiter elegantiarum*, or final referee on all points of taste in genteel dissipation. Undermined by the deadly jealousy of Nero's most shameless favorite Tigellinus, Petronius, amid light-hearted banter, opened his own veins and ended his life, having first sent to the emperor—not, like other victims, a humble confession and bequest of his wealth, but—a deadly arraignment, including a list of all the men and women whom the tyrant's greed, passion, or suspicion had destroyed.

Annales, xvi., 18.

The notion that our romance was the document just mentioned is almost too absurd to repeat. That "Trimalchio" was in detail an unmistakable portrait of Tigellinus is not improbable, and would alone suffice to explain the murderous hatred of the favorite for his satirist.

LATIN ILIAD

With this Menippean or Rabelaisian satire we have passed the line, no longer well-defined, between prose and verse. Almost a parody also, in its brevity, freedom, and inadequacy, is the version based on Homer and called the "Latin Iliad." We must not suppose that Andronicus's archaic "Odyssey" had waited so long for a pendant. Indeed, several earlier translations are mentioned. In the form transmitted to us these ten hundred and seventy hexameters date from the Julian dynasty. The passage which makes this assured is itself a bold embroidery of the original.

Supra, p. 22.

"Had not the lord of the wide sea-waters rescued Æneas,
Destined, an exile, Troy to restore in a happier region, . . .
Then would the rise of a well-loved dynasty never have happened."

Ascribed with incredible ignorance to Homer, or, yet more strangely, to Pindar, this performance long maintained itself as a mediæval text-book.

CALPURNIUS

An imitator of Virgil's Bucolics, without his genius or fresh charm, is T. Calpurnius Piso. Of his seven pastorals, several use this form merely to eulogize a young, beautiful, and poetic living emperor. These and numerous other allusions, not excepting the announcement of an in

coming golden age, point to the first years of Nero's rule. The four poems formerly added to these seven, in MSS. and editions, are still remoter echoes of an echo, to be credited to the late versifier Nemesianus.

Perhaps connected with these seven poems is a Panegyric on Calpurnius Piso, clearly the man who was consul under Nero, but in 65 A.D. lost his life as a conspirator against his master. The eulogist describes himself as a poor youth. It has been perhaps too ingeniously suggested, that he may have been adopted into the *gens* of his patron and so bore his name.

Tacitus, Annales, xv., 48.

PERSIUS

34–62 A.D.

Possibly it is the general barrenness or silence of his time that has aided the shrill, piercing cry of young Persius to reach so far across the centuries. He is aware that he is no true singer. Originality, in substance or style, will hardly be claimed for him. His manner is a painful distortion of Horace's, and he lashes, more fiercely and intolerantly, much the same follies or sins. He may have been also heavily indebted to Lucilius. He offers us altogether only six hundred and fifty hexameters, to which the Epilogue, if authentic, adds fourteen "limping" iambic verses. Yet in the peculiarly Roman field of satire he is usually counted as a creditable third. Lucan, Quintilian, Martial, promptly unite in hearty praise of Persius. Later antiquity, and the Middle Ages, kept his influence alive. In his modern editors, even down to the days of Conington and Gildersleeve, he has been most fortunate.

What is his charm? To be perfectly truthful, most men do not discover it at all, and are almost tempted to wonder if his admirers find it in his obscurity itself. Through that obscurity, which makes him almost incohe-

rent, is heard the fierce sincerity of youth. He preaches pure Stoic dogmas, amid a shameless and vicious world. But it is a world which he does not really know, as Juvenal, for instance, does, and his doctrines are but the orthodox and thrice-familiar maxims of his mentors.

It is most pleasing when the tired youth recalls his boyish attempts to escape his taskmasters, in the days when

> "I did not wish
> To learn by heart the dying Cato's words:
> Which my daft tutor, though, would loud applaud,
> And with a glow of pride my father heard,
> When I declaimed to his assembled friends."

Even in so brief a career may be seen some progress toward clear and natural expression. Amid some of the most wilful of his figures, like the "mere plaster of a varnished tongue," one may cull such tender lines as these to his instructor:

> "It is my joy to show, O sweet my friend,
> To you, how large a part of me is yours.
> . . . A hundred voices I might dare to crave,
> That I in clearest utterance might reveal
> How in my heart's recesses you are fixt."

Yet, even if we had only Latin poets to touch the harp-strings of the soul, it would still be not Persius but Catullus who strikes with full mastery the note of friendship or gratitude.

Supra, p. 120.

The only other surviving poet of Nero's day, Lucan, must open a new chapter.

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The minor authors here mentioned may be passed over lightly by the young student. "Trimalchio" has lately been introduced into good society through an illustrated translation and essay by Professor H. T. Peck. This is quite enough of Petronius for any save the

learned specialist. The far more respectable Columella does not appear to have been edited, nor translated into English or German, since the eighteenth century. Calpurnius's pastorals, the eulogy on Piso, and the "Latin Iliad" may be read conveniently in Bährens's "Poetæ Latini Minores." Persius is most skilfully rendered in prose by Professor Conington, whose edition has since been improved by Nettleship. In Professor Gildersleeve's edition there is a close study of the linguistic perversities.

CHAPTER XXX

THE EPIC POETRY

FROM the first century A.D. we have the works of four poets, who must be classified as epic. By evident imitation, or even by explicit tributes, like Statius's, they reveal their consciousness of Virgil's supremacy. They all show, in varying degree, a careful effort in hexameter versification, full knowledge of historical incident or mythical tradition, and power of vivid portrayal. They have had comparatively little influence or importance in the general story of European literature, and their relative value will never increase.

Supra, p. 156

This may not be due chiefly to the depressing effect of a Tiberius, or a Domitian, on individual genius. The Roman or Latin type of man had accomplished his mission, chiefly one of aggressive action and organization. He was hardly holding his past conquests. National pride could no longer spur to such heroic exploits in war or peace as the epic poet celebrates. Rome was indeed rather cosmopolitan than national: but humanity itself seemed for the time to have no inspiring ideals, no goal of action, save Stoical endurance, or Epicurean indulgence.

LUCAN

(39–65 A.D.)

In no epoch, even of Roman imperialism, does human existence seem so like a mad maelstrom, as in the latter years of Nero's reign. Few lives could better illustrate the swift and utter shipwreck of a brilliant career than Lu-

can's. Marcus Annæus Lucanus, the nephew of Seneca, naturally became from boyhood the personal intimate of Nero. At the first *Neronia*,—athletic and musical contests in the young ruler's honor, —Lucan delivered a panegyric on his master, to whom the first prizes in music and eloquence were assigned without competition. As a poet Nero was no less imperiously ambitious. Whether the verses ascribed to him were really his own, or contributed by various obsequious courtiers, is a point on which Suetonius and Tacitus, our chief authorities, apparently disagree.

60 A.D.

Suetonius, Nero, § 52.

Tacitus, Annales, xiv., 16.

The horrors of Nero's later reign began about this time with the assassination of his mother, Agrippina, and the death, probably the murder, of the sturdy prefect, Burrus, who had dared to say, "If you insist on divorcing Claudius's daughter, at least give back first her dowry: the empire."

59 A.D.

62 A.D.

Whether such a tyrant showed active jealousy or cold indifference to Lucan's popular recitations and rising fame, is again disputable. One may well have been the mask of the other. That the young poet, forbidden to read again in public, was bitterly enraged, and at last actually drawn into Piso's plot, is more easily believed than his uncle's complicity in the same mad scheme. Lucan took, indeed, a most prominent and open part. Yet when the exposure came, he made frantic efforts to save his forfeited life, even denouncing as a conspirator his innocent mother, in the hope that this would appeal to the sympathy of a matricide!

Supra, p. 240

Suetonius, Life of Lucan.

Lucan's extant "Pharsalia," or "De Bello Civili," an epic account of the civil war between Pompey and Cæsar, seems consistent with this strange biography. The first book contains a passage of most

Phars., I., 33-36.

fulsome adulation on the young emperor. In the later portions hatred of tyranny is more and more boldly expressed. The first three books of the epic, begun in 60 A.D., had been published with Nero's approval: the other seven were found in MS. after the author's death.

E.g., vii., 456 ff.

It is remarkable, however, that Lucan's preference for Pompey, his aversion for the great Julius as the author of all the subsequent evils of Rome, is clearly shown from the first, though far more fiercely and boldly expressed in later passages. Lucan is no less incensed, moreover, with the divine government of the world. It is a correct instinct that has preserved in the popular mind his one most audacious, perhaps impious, but magnificent verse:

"Dearer the victor's cause to the gods: but to Cato the vanquished."

The great length and prominence of the speeches marks the declamatory taste of the age and of the poet. Cicero is even introduced, before the battle, urging Pompey to vigorous action by a long harangue which he certainly never delivered. Lucan sees nothing good in Cæsar, little save the noblest heroic qualities in Pompey. We cannot, then, regard the poet as a safe witness, even, to the facts of recent history. Fair-minded Livy had been called a "Pompeian" in half-serious banter; but we may be sure Lucan's account is no true reflection of the historian's lost books.

This crude passionate young poet has some exceptional powers, but they are chiefly employed in strenuous special pleading for a bad political cause, or in the lurid description of horrors, on desert march or battlefield, or even in remote digressions into myth and earlier history. Quintilian well calls him "a model for orators rather than for poets."

Quint., x., 1, 90.

SILIUS ITALICUS

(26–101 A.D.)

Very different was the long career of Silius Italicus, which is sufficiently outlined, at the time of his death, by a letter from the younger Pliny. Though high in office, and even notorious as an informer (*delator*) at the end of Nero's career, he safely outlived all the three Flavian emperors, acquired eagerly vast estates in Campania, which included a former villa of Cicero and the burial-place of Virgil—and ended his own life voluntarily and cheerily at last by starvation, to escape an incurable disease. The most gracious act recorded of him is that he habitually celebrated Virgil's birthday far more elaborately than his own, usually making a pilgrimage to his tomb at Naples as if to a shrine. There is a hint of weariness in Pliny's courteous words: "He composed verses with more energy than genius. Sometimes he tested men's opinions of them by recitations."

Pliny, iii., 7.

Martial, xi., 48.

The chief result of this energy is extant, in over twelve thousand lines on the struggle between Carthage and Rome. Though the seventeen books may seem a rather wilful number, the tale is clearly completed, with the victory of Zama and the triumphant home return of Scipio.

To the traditional Roman annals Silius has carefully added at every stage the Olympian machinery, Juno especially guiding the Carthaginians, Venus aiding the descendants of her beloved Æneas. We find little indeed of true and original poetry, not even the audacity and glaring faults of Lucan; but at every turn servile imitation of earlier poetry, above all of the Æneid, and, through it, of the Homeric poems. Sometimes these echoes grow childishly naïve, or wearisome, as when Scipio, in defiance of all history or tradition,

xiii., 395–894.

is described as descending, like Æneas, through Avernus to the under-world, to learn his high future destiny. Again Hannibal's shield, though but the gift and handiwork of mortals, is described almost as carefully as Vulcan's masterpiece. A prophecy of Jupiter to Venus as to the future of Rome enables the poet to eulogize the Flavian emperors, most of all the atrocious tyrant Domitian, who was then near his end. The close of Book XIV., however, is supposed to allude to Nerva as him "who now hath given peace unto the world."

Silius ii., 395-452. Cf. Æneid, viii., 626.

Silius iii., 571 ff. Cf. Æneid, i., 257; iii., 607.

This patriotic and martial subject is one which had once appealed mightily to Roman pride, having been treated by Nævius, and by Ennius also, at the very beginning of literary activity in Latium. It will serve as a reminder, which may well be needed, that this is still the race and land of the Scipios, the Fabii, and the Marcelli.

Supra, pp. 26 and 34.

VALERIUS FLACCUS

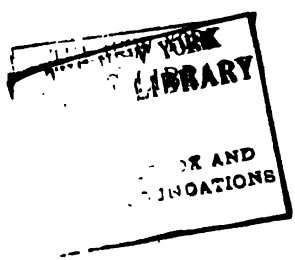
Distinctly more readable, not wholly on account of its relative brevity, is Flaccus's, "Argonautica," now extant, but not complete, in eight books. Of the author's life hardly anything is known. In his opening verses he dedicates his poem cleverly to the reigning Vespasian, who by his expedition to Britain has won a higher fame than Jason's for opening up alien seas. The emperor's younger son Domitian had then poetic ambitions, and it is prophesied hat he will glorify in verse his brother Titus, who is even now hurling firebrands at the walls of Jerusalem. This seems to point clearly to 70 A.D., while the later books, containing repeated allusions to the eruption of Vesuvius, must be composed after 79. Quintilian, writing about 90 A.D., expresses regret over his friend's recent death. Whether the poem was left unfin-

Quint. x., i., 90.



ROMAN SOLDIERS CARRYING THE GOLDEN CANDLESTICK FROM THE TEMPLE AT JERUSALEM.

Relief from the arch of Titus.


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ished, or is merely mutilated in the MSS., is still debated. It breaks off at a critical point, when Medea's brother has just overtaken the fleeing Argonauts, and a sea-fight is in immediate prospect.

This work must be studied, if at all, in connection with the Greek "Argonautica" of the Alexandrian poet Apollonios Rhodios, which had been rendered, apparently with fidelity, into Latin also. Though less graceful in the details of style, the Roman poet often improves on his model in plot, succeeding, in particular, in giving to Jason far more action such as befits a commander and hero-in-chief. Yet William Morris's "Life and Death of Jason" may outlive both the classic poems. A phrase of Homer, mentioning the "Argo, to all men familiar," gives us the impression that this subject was rather hackneyed even in his day. The three poems here mentioned, not to speak of others in a hundred languages, may remind us how perennial is the vitality of the great Hellenic myths.

STATIUS

45–96 A.D.(?).

Though spent wholly under the terrible Domitian, this is a real literary career. Statius appears to have been not merely by profession but by inheritance a scholar and a poet. His father is most filially described as the master of a flourishing school of literature and rhetoric in Naples. There the youth from many Italian lands not only conned their Homer,

Silvæ, v., 3.

"Learning how Ilium fell, or the long delay of Ulysses,"

but mastered every notable Greek poet, from the "old Ascræan," Hesiod, to Sophron the mime, or the learned Alexandrians. This father himself sang the burning of the capital in 69 A.D., and, as Dante says of the son, on

the way sank with a second burden, also of contemporary interest, viz., the eruption of Vesuvius in 79. It was under this paternal advice and counsel that the son, Publius Papinius Statius, toiled for twelve years on his ponderous, learned, rhetorical, unreadable masterpiece, the Thebaid.

80–92 (?) A.D.

The subject had been treated in early Greek epic, not in one poem, but in three. So Aischylos wrought the tale of Laios, of Oidipus, and of his quarrelling sons, into three tragedies, linked together by the hereditary curse. Sophocles in "Antigone" and either "Oidipus," Euripides or Roman Seneca in the "Phœnissæ," attempted single episodes only. The subject, then, lacked adequate unity. Even more utterly than the Argo's voyage did it lack, also, any shadow of application or vital interest for Statius's age and land. Yet in that century, and in others since, especially while Greek was unknown in Western Europe, and declamatory rhetoric could be mistaken for true poetry, Statius's epic was a text-book, and a general favorite.

The issue of the single books gave him fame, and a certain degree of court favor. Martial, himself a needy adventurer, pays Statius the eloquent tribute of jealous silence. Juvenal mentions the fashionable rush when the author's readings from the Thebaid are posted, but adds sourly:

"Yet doth he starve, if he sell not to Paris his virgin 'Agave.'"

This refers to a commission to write a mime for the favorite actor.

After a disappointment, curiously like Tasso's, a failure to win the poet's crown in a competitive contest, Statius retired to Naples, and in his last years composed his Achilleis. Though incomplete, it is a far more adequate fragment than, *e.g.*, Goethe's, and also shows distinct advance toward true poetic taste. Indeed, as an idyll, or miniature epic, his

account of the boy Achilles's stay in Skyros might well be perused again in our colleges. The story of Odysseus's coming, of his detection of the youth who, though disguised as a girl among girls, prefers arms to trinkets when gifts are chosen,—all this is clearly paralleled in a striking Pompeian wall-painting, which may well be a rough replica of some great masterpiece like Polygnotos's in the Athenian Propylaia. The incident, then, is by no means of Statius's invention. Doubtless, Sophocles's lost "Skyrians" set it forth infinitely better. But once again the chance of survival has favored the coarser Roman copy.

In comparison with these labored works, Statius himself disdained his "Silvæ" or occasional poems, thrown off in haste, and at amazing speed, upon the demand of any court favorite. Yet it is in them that we find him a poet. The occasions are indeed often ignoble. The savage emperor, a Greek freedman of the palace, or any other successful adventurer, even a boy pet or page, could set this nimble quill in motion. A curious tree, a statue, a sumptuous villa, must have its memorial verse. An elegy is due for a page, a parrot, a lion. Statius is ready, perforce.

When the favorite eunuch orders verses on his own curly locks, dedicated and sent to an Oriental shrine, Statius grows aweary of this mad world—and the next poem is a tender plea to his Roman wife to share his retreat in saner, quieter Naples. Of the thirty-two poems in the "Silvæ" one might choose this, the birthday ode, in hendecasyllables, for Lucan's anniversary, and a pathetic appeal of the wakeful poet to Somnus, for an anthology of sincere and pure Latin verse. Yet the others also abound in truthful local color and natural feeling. Perhaps the appeal to Somnus is unique in its combination of classic form and imagery with a universal human need.

Silvæ, v., 4, 7-13.

"Seven times hath Phœbe looked on me
Languishing, and the stars of eve and morn
Their lamps relit: while heedless of my pain
Tithonia passes in half-pitying scorn,
Nor lays her cooling touch upon my brain.

Were I as Argus, and my thousand eyes
Alternate veiled, nor ever all awake,
'Twere well."

Every tired brain and throbbing heart the world over, to the end of time, can share the hope that a moment's restful unconsciousness came swiftly to the eyes that could not be

"Wholly enfolded by Sleep's downy wings:
This let the vulgar throng, more happy, crave."

By a curious fate, however, Statius's best chance of immortal fame comes through a bold fiction of a far greater Italian poet a thousand years later. Most students of Dante feel that the "Commedia" grew and widened with the wandering exile's years, and is full of happy afterthoughts. Statius is not mentioned with the other Roman poets who are Virgil's companions in Limbo. Long after, in composing the "Purgatorio," Dante repairs the omission. But, if met on the mountain of purification, Statius, according to Dante's creed, must have been in his lifetime converted and duly baptized. There is no authority known for any such statement: yet none can regret the passage where Statius assures Virgil that the prophetic words of the Fourth Eclogue had set him on the quest that led to truth and salvation.

Inferno, iv.

Purgatorio, xxii., 67-69.

"Thou didst as he that walketh in the night,
Who bears his light behind, which helps him not,
But wary makes the persons after him
. . . Through thee I poet was, through thee a Christian."

Ibid., 73.

It may at first thought seem quite possible, that Statius was a timid and secret convert to Christianity. It is, however, highly improbable, as was noted as to Seneca: and there was not even, in the poet's case, any such late-invented tradition, like the spurious correspondence between the philosopher and St. Paul. The "Epistle to the Romans" appears to be addressed to a little circle of Greeks and of Jews who may often have borne Greek names. Such folk often attained in Rome the utmost influence, as we have seen: but whether slaves or freedmen, their nominal position was still servile, though they might serve in "Cæsar's household," and be close to the emperor's ear. But the haughty indifference of Gallio is typical, for at least the first century, of the Roman attitude toward nearly all Oriental peoples and creeds. Even the famous persecutions by Nero and Domitian may have included the Christians under the larger, far more familiar, and detested name of Hebrews. In Pliny's letters to Trajan we have for the first time a fairly intelligent account of the new sect. In the "Commedia" itself it is remarked, that Statius's epics are full of the Olympian theology. We have not the least right to imagine that Dante had before him any recorded tradition of the Roman poet's conversion.

EPILOGUE AND PROLOGUE

With Statius we are already amid the last notable group of Latin authors whom we can fairly call classical. There are at least five literary men of his generation who are masters, each in his own field and style. At first thought it may seem contradictory to insist that such an age of letters is a decadent one.

But we must remember that the metropolis received constant tribute of fresh, ambitious young life from all lands. Not merely did Hellas, Judæa, the remoter Orient, pour

into Rome the treasures of its culture, poetry, myth, theology, and mystical lore. From Spain, alone, came Seneca, Lucan, Quintilian, Martial, and many another. Some, but not all, of these provincials were of Italian descent or speech. The wonder is, that the literature founded by Oscan Ennius and African Terence held so long, in form and largely in substance, to the austerer Græco-Roman or classical tradition. It is not at all strange that, with Apuleius, there comes at last the sudden and decisive break. Silver Latin, then, is written chiefly by aliens. Forced into Latin utterance, set before a Roman audience, these men cast a certain splendor even over Nero's or Domitian's day.

Yet we are far indeed from the fresh dawn. Of heroic epic, Attic drama, Platonic philosophy and ethic, the epoch of Seneca and Statius could furnish but a turgid travesty. It is not an age of noble deeds, of creative imagination, of joyous expression, but a time of superabundant intellectual stimulus and culture, of cynical unbelief to the verge of despair, of clever, keen-pointed rhetoric.

These five great masters—to whom the Statius of the "Silvæ" might be added—whose works are still indispensable to every serious Latin student, are alike in this: they make no attempt to idealize their own century: they offer us a truthful but disconsolate picture. Their works may be perused with profit by mature men and women, who already know life, and know themselves. Youth should be chiefly nourished on the loftier, or at least happier, utterances of ruder ages and more hopeful folk.

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The epic poets here mentioned are rarely read, either in English or Latin. Every serious student of the classics should at least have on his shelf the handy, legible, and inexpensive Teubner texts. The "Argonautica" is edited by Bährens, who not only treats his text with unwonted reverence, but adds a full list of Virgilian passages imitated.

Lucan is discussed in interesting fashion by Merivale, in his "History of the Roman Empire." He appears as a minor character in Sinkiewicz's romance "Quo Vadis." The "standard translation" of the Pharsalia by Rowe is warmly praised in the Britannica. The version of the Thebaid, Book I., by Pope as a boy of twelve, is a most precocious exploit, even if he did "retouch" it later. Some delightful renderings from the "Silvæ" by Miss H. W. Preston were made for the Warner "Library": the citation of one in this chapter (p. 268) is in slightly changed form.

There is a scholarly edition of the "Silvæ" by Markland, and Heitland has made a tiny edition of the "Pharsalia," Book I. The other two epics have been strikingly neglected by English scholars.

CHAPTER XXXI

MARTIAL AND JUVENAL

MARTIAL

41–104 A.D. (?)

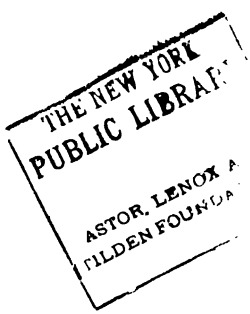
MARCUS VALERIUS MARTIALIS, chief of Roman wits, author of more successful epigrams than any other European versifier, was born at Bilbilis, a little town set picturesquely on a Spanish hill-crest, over a swift, cold stream, the Salo. "Sprung from Iberians and Celts," he says repeatedly of himself. Good Latin schools were naturally accessible in the native land of Quintilian and the Senecas. Indeed, there is felt again at this epoch, in Spain, the same mighty stimulus, given by Roman culture to intellectual life, as in another Celtic region, the Transpadane provinces, in the time of Catullus, Virgil, and Livy.

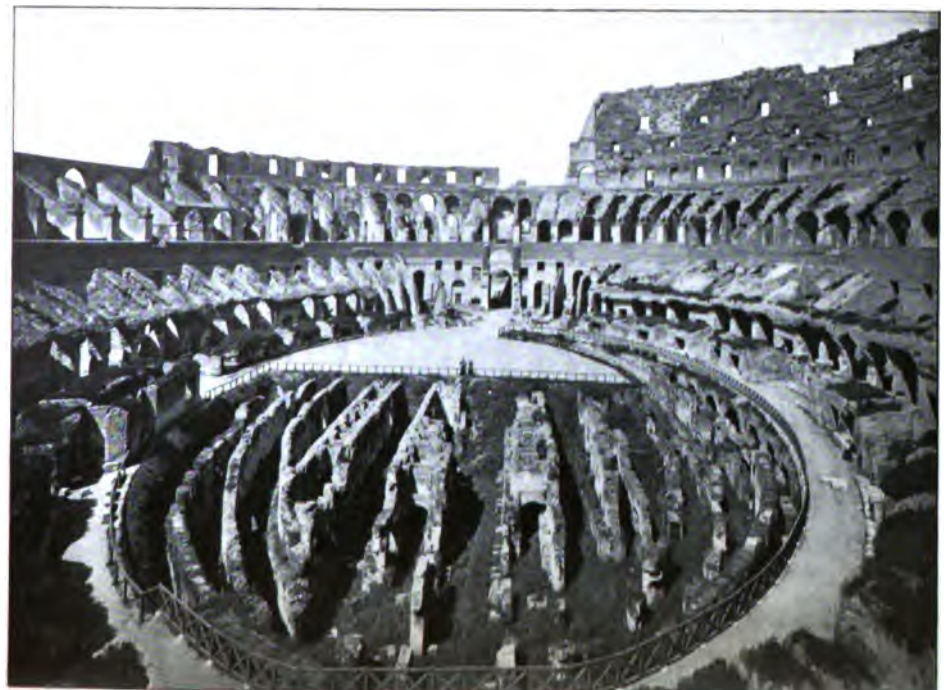
Cf. supra., pp. 114–15.

Just what eddy of the world-wide social whirlpool landed the clever, ambitious youth in Rome we need not ask. There, for thirty-four years, he practised all the arts of the needy adventurer, the obsequious client, the courtier of a Nero and a Domitian, and of their villanous favorites. To shiver in the early dawn at a haughty patron's gate, to dine on coarser food below the salt, to accept petty gifts with extravagant thanks, or even to wheedle for them in vain, was his year-long vocation. That he knew Rome perfectly, indeed far too well, will hardly be questioned.

64–98 A.D.

His material rewards were curiously scanty, if we may judge from his verses. He begs for anything, a fortune


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INTERIOR VIEW OF THE COLISEUM.

from the emperor, or a second-best toga from a friend: but almost never does he return thanks. His little Sabine farm, acquired we know not how, is barren and wretched. The villa, he declares, has not even a tight roof over it. His town lodging is in a fourth story, a garret. Later he has a small city house of his own, and a mule-team. Yet when he finally gives up the struggle and retires to Bilbilis, the kindly, patronizing Pliny has to furnish the *viaticum*.

Pliny, Epist., iii., 21.

Yet Martial had hosts of friends, among the more prosperous literary men and the great nobles. He had even been a guest at Domitian's table. He seems never to have married. It would appear certain, then, that his failure to gather a competence was due to some form of extravagance or vicious waste. One can hardly accept his assertion,

"My page is frolicsome, my life unstained."

Certainly he attained promptly, and held for many years, the highest popularity as an author.

Martial's poems are extremely brief, and almost invariably "occasional." They are usually in elegiac couplet or hendecasyllables. Doubtless he wrote busily all his life, though his collected verses began to appear rather late. When Titus dedicated the Flavian ampitheatre, our "Coliseum," with splendid pageants and contests, Martial described the games in a series of elegiac poems, now incompletely preserved. These courtly studies have rarely the final epigrammatic whip-snap of his later efforts. He seems sincerely impressed with the greatness of the empire.

80 A.D.

"Liber Spectaculorum," iii., 1-2, 11-12.

"Where is a land so distant, a race so barbarous, Cæsar,
Whence in thy city to-day no spectator appears?
Various soundeth the speech of the people, yet truly united,
Since of the fatherland thou rightly the father art named."

Four years later Martial published the singular work, or pair of works, now known as Book XIII. (Xenia) and XIV. (Apophoreta) of his great collection. Each poem is a mere couplet, to accompany a present at the time of the Saturnalia. The book of Apophoreta contains paired poems, one for the rich patron, the other to accompany the humbler return-gift of the client. The one hundred and twenty-seven Xenia are nearly all for presents of dainty foods or spices, and give a lively glimpse at imperial luxury. Even here the courtier is often seen.

84 A.D.

A PARROT

"Now in the names of many shall I by you be instructed.
'Hail, O Cæsar!' to cry,—this by myself have I learned."

INCENSE

"Praying that late may Germanicus pass to be monarch of Heaven,
Long that on earth he may rule,—offer this incense to Jove."

The implied supremacy of Domitian over Jupiter is a commonplace of Roman flattery.

The twelve volumes of real epigrams appeared later, in rapid succession. The prose preface to the first book announces that the poet writes not for Cato, but for such as enjoy the mimes at the Floralia, or merry May-day festival. He names Catullus among his masters, yet anxiously denies that he attacks, even under substituted names, any real persons. The first epigram announces:

85-102 A.D.

"This is he that you read and ask again for,
Martial, famous in every land or nation."

Though possibly prefixed to a second edition, this was, no doubt, simple truth. Martial has no undue vanity. Hy-

pocrisy is the one trait at which he waxes indignant. No man could be less of a Puritan. He sees the ludicrous keenly, of course, but he is rarely even satirical, much less does he preach, at sinner or sin. Even when at times he wearies of Vanity Fair, he pretends to no lofty aspirations. Perhaps his frankest utterance of his wishes, though the original is in the jerky, eleven-syllable verse that always makes the stately Roman words seems whimsical, may be thus paraphrased.

x., 47.

"The things which render life more blest are these:
Wealth as a heritage, not won by toil,
A fertile farm, one hearth the whole year through,
No strife, a tranquil spirit, coatless ease,
Vigorous muscles in a healthy frame,
Informal social ties and simple fare,
Suppers that cheer but not intoxicate,
A modest yet a fond and willing wife,
Sleep such as makes the hours of darkness brief,
—Perfect contentment with that which we are,
Without desire, or terror, for the End."

Such are Martial's best tones. Direct advertisement of, *e.g.*, a patron's baths, blackmail, or something very like it, above all loving, lingering details of every foulest vice, we meet all too often on these sprightly pages. The man who receives his praise, and fails to pay well for it, is frankly stigmatized as a cheat. He will even beg a benefactor to buy back his own gifts.

v., 36; vii., 16.

Virtues he had, also: loyalty to friends humble or lofty, kindness to slaves, to children, and to the helpless generally, and last, like the Senecas, a yearning homesickness, that actually brought him back to his birthplace at the end. That he found Nerva and Trajan cold to his flatteries is natural. But it is by no means certain that he tried to win them by assailing the memory of Domitian. That final

charge of meanness depends on a couplet quoted by a scholiast on Juvenal, interpreted, and assigned to Martial, only on that scholiast's assertion.

At Bilbilis a wealthy lady, Marcella, gave him a really beautiful estate. He assures her that she herself replaces Rome to him. Yet the whole tone seems far too deferential for a lover or husband: it is more likly that he had found at last an ideal patroness.

There, too, he grew restless, eager for the excitement, the stimulus, the comradeship, even the hollow and heartless splendor, of the world-city. Envy crept into his Paradise. Yet he was doubtless glad to grow old, in peace, at home.

With a good-will in which respect is hardly mingled, we may repeat over Martial's grave the sentiment of the line he had once composed for a pretty slave-girl and dancer:

"Light lie upon her, O earth: lightly on you did she tread."

Of dignity, not to mention noble aspiration, he has no taste. The ideals even of sensuous beauty, which Ovid could still see and portray, are almost vanished. Yet Martial at least saw his own environment clearly and accurately. He set down with little malice, in swift, light outlines, just what he saw. The wit of antithesis, of grotesquerie, even of delicate humor, sweetens nearly every page. Of the twelve hundred epigrams in his twelve chief books, perhaps one-sixth should be effaced forever from human memory. The rest offer a picture quite ignoble enough, and as accurate as could well be, of Domitian's Rome.

JUVENAL

Of this author's life hardly anything is positively known. Between Juvenal and Martial there is, after all, but one important link: they both give us vivid pictures of the same age. Juvenal, however, lives in the security of a later

time, while he describes Domitian's terrible days. After wide experience, already past middle life, he writes with the bitterness of a disappointed old man. The satires are to be divided into five books, which appear to have been composed and published in regular chronological succession, under Trajan and Hadrian. The poet is supposed to have lived till past eighty, and to have died in the reign of Antoninus.

Juvenal mentions no living folk: a prudent limitation. His sermons, moreover, ring far less sincere than Seneca's. Like Seneca also, especially in the powerful and savage Sixth Satire, aimed at the vices of women, he dwells with a certain enjoyment on the coarsest details. It really seems incredible, that this fiercest of all tirades against women is addressed to a friend about to marry. It is amusing to notice that the athletic woman, and yet more the learned blue-stocking, are quite as obnoxious as their murderous or vicious sisters.

The impression is constantly given, in this and most of the early satires, that Juvenal is more anxious to be piquant, picturesque, thrilling, than to draw a truthful sketch. In the weaving of a social history of the empire, then, his fierce, heavy satires do not compare in importance with Martial's winged epigrams.

Yet Juvenal's style is a powerful weapon. His phrases have a way of stamping themselves indelibly on the memory of mankind. *Mens sana in corpore sano* needs no translation. A sermon, clinched with an epigrammatic antithesis, is perfectly packed into two verses:

> "Count it the greatest of sins, to prefer existence to honor,
> And, for the sake of life, to lose all reason for living."

A shrewd commonplace and a complete picture are set before us in a single line,

"Empty-handed, a traveller sings in the face of the robber."

Perhaps the severest criticism to be made on Juvenal is precisely this, that he is so quotable. His best passages are quite as effective alone. His satires rarely have any natural beginning or end, any artistic unity. His influence has been greatly increased, no doubt, by the bitter disapproval, the austere aloofness from which he gazes, with us as it were, upon his degenerate and ignoble time. This has made his volume a storehouse of weapons for the Christian preacher in every age. Persius is herein somewhat like him, but Juvenal has the advantage of mature experience, of a knowledge almost as intimate and detailed as Martial's.

The best-known satires of Juvenal are no doubt the two imitated by Dr. Johnson in his "London" and "Vanity of Human Wishes." The description of Rome—or London, as Dr. Johnson recasts it—in the former piece, leaves a decidedly encouraged feeling, at least as to the physical cleanliness, comfort, and safety of modern cities. The complaints against fierce competition, favoritism, the poverty of the honest man, still sound familiar. A better unity than usual is attained by the mention of the upright Umbricius, whose departure from the city for Cumæ is announced at the beginning, and occurs at the close.

Juvenal, iii. and x.

The Tenth Satire is the most moderate in tone, the largest in outlook. The illustrations are gathered from a wide field, Hannibal, even Priam, appearing beside Cicero and Sejanus. In preaching against vain ambition, praising moderation, and contentment, Juvenal approaches much nearer than usual the calm level of Horace.

Oftener his strenuous, shrill tones, his lurid colorings, leave us unsympathetic and cold from their very extravagance. Yet in the thirteenth poem the futility of revenge, the torture of remorse, the consciousness of sin, are so painted as to justify the surmise that Juvenal was familiar

with Christian ethics. In the fourteenth, again, the duties of parents are earnestly set forth : above all, the reverence due to childhood, the necessity of offering an example of spotless purity.

In general, the later satires are calmer, better connected, clearer in expression. We seem oftener to catch the sincere natural tones of the man, not the high-pitched voice of the declaimer. The learned German scholar Ribbeck, indeed, insisted that these latter poems are greatly inferior in merit, and clearly from another hand, not Juvenal's at all: but this theory is hardly defended now by anyone.

Almost any poem of Juvenal's, however, is depressing in tone, difficult to follow in detail, ineffective as a whole. He should be read by all, save specialists, in mere extracts more or less sustained. In that form he has some claims as a poet, but more as a prophet of a larger moral law, of a better age than his people had known.

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The chief commentator on Martial is the German scholar Friedländer, who has a most thorough edition in two volumes with German notes. We may mention here also the same author's "Sittengeschichte Roms," to which the notes of his edition often refer. Martial offers the best starting-point for a student who wishes to approach that unsavory but important subject. Martial's works suffer nothing by severe sifting, and Professor Sellar in his useful school edition even omits lines from some single poems which he wished to include. Both in the introduction to this text-book, and in the "Britannica," Sellar made a tolerant, even an appreciative, study of Martial.

This author's epigrammatic terseness naturally appealed especially to the age of Dryden, Pope, and Johnson. Teachers who desire to supplement this too brief chapter will find in Bohn's Classical Library a remarkably useful volume, giving not only a literal translation, but a select verse rendering also, of every epigram that is fit to be read at all.

The two poems of Dr. Johnson mentioned in the text are not translations, but in general plan and many details they imitate Juvenal's Third and Tenth Satires. There are English translations of Juvenal in

verse by Gifford, Hodgson, Badham: none absolutely faithful in his coarsest passages. Even Lewis's prose version softens the original somewhat. This latter translation is combined with the Latin text, and accompanied by a volume of useful notes. The monumental edition by J. B. Mayor is exhaustive in all senses. Sellar's article in the "Britannica," and Ramsay's in the Smith "Dictionary of Greek and Roman Biography" are well known. But Juvenal is best understood in connection with the general life of his time, for which we may once more refer especially to Friedländer and Merivale. We can hardly hope that the section of the venerable Professor Mommsen's history on this period will ever appear.

CHAPTER XXXII

QUINTILIAN

THE three prominent authors of this epoch still to be discussed all win our hearty admiration and regard. They were thoroughly sane, shrewd, practical men, and all had honorable, happy careers. Their productions, to be sure, are at best merely in the border-land of creative art. Diverse as they are in many respects, each attained a remarkably effective, finished, and suitable prose style. To them, indeed, Latin owes largely its extraordinary vitality and influence, still exerted through the Romance languages, and through our own English speech, as well as directly, on the forms of literary taste.

Quintilian is in one respect even more notable than Pliny or Tacitus: for his useful career was rounded out, and his chief work published, amid the reign of terror in Domitian's last years. Indeed, the one or two pages of his that cause us serious regret are his eulogies of the "most holy censor," "the prince most eminent in eloquence as in all else," that "god than whom none is more present or helpful to effort," etc., etc. Such words doubtless seemed a necessary price to pay for safety and prosperity in the year 95 A.D. Yet we may be sure that a twelvemonth later Quintilian bitterly regretted that it was too late to cancel the passage, and to dedicate his great work, in more temperate and sincere terms, to Nerva or Trajan.

Quint., Institut., iv., Prologue.

Marcus Fabius Quintilianus, of humble Spanish birth, was by profession, and even by heredity, a teacher of rhet-

oric and oratory. After studying with the best masters at Rome, he retired, in Nero's worst days, to Spain, but came back to the capital in Galba's train, and there remained. Under Vespasian, he, first of the rhetors, received a regular and liberal salary from the emperor. After twenty years' service at the head of his flourishing school, he retired from regular teaching, and soon devoted himself to the composition of his chief work, "Institutiones Oratoriæ," or The Education of the Orator.

68–88 A. D.

The outburst of gratitude quoted above was occasioned by his appointment as tutor to the Emperor Domitian's grand-nephews. We hear that he was even brevetted to consular rank. Such an elevation of a school-master can hardly have pleased even the cowed and decimated nobility of that day, but no one seems to have envied his prosperity. Pliny was his grateful pupil. Martial's apostrophe

Ausonius, p. 23.

> "O Quintilian, restless youth's most eminent ruler,
> O Quintilian, thou pride of the toga of Rome,"

seems playfully affectionate rather than obsequious. We have quoted under Statius from the querulous Seventh Satire of Juvenal, on the meagre rewards doled out by wealthy patrons to literary genius. Quintilian is there made the typical if not the unique exception, but there is no bitterness, unless the repeated allusions to his good fortune may intimate a lack of superior merit.

Supra, p. 266

> ". . . Fortunate, venturesome, handsome,
> Fortunate, truly, and wise, and noble. . . .
> Lucky indeed is the man, and than a white crow is he rarer."

The mature orator's girl-wife had died at nineteen. One of her boys lived to be five, the other ten. The heart-

broken preface to Book VI., written when the last blow had just fallen, reminds us of Emerson's "Threnody." There is a peculiar pathos when the orator and classical scholar notes the dead child's "clearness of voice, sweetness of tone, and a peculiar facility in sounding every letter in either language. . . . What good parent could forgive me, if I could go calmly on with my studies?"

Quintilian has by no means left us a mere manual of technical rhetoric. Following Cicero, in this as in all else, most reverently, he would have his orator first a good man, a useful citizen, a statesman, a scholar, even a philosopher. The education of the future pleader is begun in the cradle, with excellent remarks on nurses. He should be sent early to school, largely to remove him from the vicious indulgences of home life in Roman palaces. "Every dining-room rings with impure songs. Things shameful to be told are the objects of sight. . . . What will he not expect in after years who has crept upon the purple?" The liberal provision of "pedagogues" and other attendants recalls how cheaply even Greek philosophers could be either hired or bought in the great metropolis.

Book I., Preface, 9–10.

The first and second of the twelve books are full of humane observations on childhood, and wise hints on primary education. If we wonder that the infants are given ivory letters for playthings, we must remember that both their languages were rationally phonetic: and "saying the alphabet" is expressly condemned. The author approves what was then habitual, to have the boy learn first to speak Greek, but thinks the use of the mother-tongue has been delayed too late, a fashion which has Hellenized the pronunciation and idiom of fashionable Rome. On emulation among ambitious boys, competitive tests, discovery and encouragement of individual talents, corporal punishment—which he condemns as slavish—and a hun-

Book I., 24, 26.

dred other topics, Quintilian has words that still deserve to be weighed carefully by every student of pedagogy.

Of almost unique interest is the Tenth Book, in which all the best authors, as Quintilian accounts them, of Greek and Latin literature, including many not now extant, are passed in thoughtful review. Indeed, Quintilian may well be counted among the sanest of literary critics. Even his brief remarks are models of method and form, as where in a curt antithesis he says of the two greatest orators: "From Demosthenes nothing can be taken away, to Cicero nothing can be added." An epigram of Martial could not have passed a better judgment on Cicero's flippant correspondent, Cælius Rufus: "A man of much ability and pleasant wit, worthy to have had longer life and nobler thoughts."

Quintilian insists that we must begin with Homer,

> "From whom all river-streams, and every sea,
> All sources, and the mighty fountains flow!"

This large appreciation gives assurance of our author's superiority to the ordinary taste of his time. He remarks impressively on the masterful knowledge of persuasive rhetoric shown, *e.g.*, in the great speeches of Iliad IX. Euripides and Menander, for similar reasons, win the critic's warmest sympathy. Menander, it may be noted, is the only Hellenic author, here named as the best in his kind, who is wholly lost.

With all his national loyalty, Quintilian frankly confesses the superior genius of the Greeks, placing Virgil second to Homer, remarking that "we scarcely attain a faint image of Greek comedy," and crediting Plato with superhuman inspiration. The extravagant eulogy on Sallust has been cited. In history, indeed, as in elegy, he feels that Rome holds its own, while "Satire certainly is wholly ours."

In this review of Græco-Roman letters we must bear constantly in mind that a rhetorician is calling attention to those authors and works which are most useful to students of his own art. It is instructive to note that he looks *back*, already, upon Virgil and Cicero no less than upon Demosthenes and Homer, as classic models. That is, the philosophic critic sees that he stands on the confines of his epoch.

The one grave blot is again an extravagant and utterly incongruous eulogy of Domitian's youthful attempts in verse. Elsewhere, though courteous to the living, he evidently recognizes the decadence of literature. This is most clearly seen in his careful closing discussion of Seneca, who at one time "had been almost the only writer in the hands of the young."

We ought, however, not to judge Quintilian by these two great episodes, as we may call them, but by his treatise as a whole. Or, if the technical portions repel us, we should at least peruse attentively the closing book, on the moral requisites, the ideal career, the civic usefulness, of the great speaker. The author is fully aware that the loss of freedom under the empire has cut the sinews of oratory. Though the Gracchi, Antonius and Crassus, and Cicero, leaders in eloquence, respectively, during the last three generations of the republic, had perished by violence, yet all had been fearless in utterance, had exerted a vital influence on the political life of their times. This was no longer possible.

Yet it may well be that Quintilian hoped for the return of better conditions. This did indeed come to pass, and for nearly a century a larger measure of dignity, if not of effective power, was accorded to the Senate. For the effort to revive a better rhetorical taste, under Trajan and his noble successors, we may safely give large credit to Quintilian's example and precedent. All that is most

practical in Cicero's various works is here reverently preserved, and the compendious objective treatise appeals to many minds far more effectively than the most graceful of desultory dialogues, like the "De Oratore." The work has still a secure position, like Euclid's in geometry, or Aristotle's in logic. Every race and generation will make its own text-books, but the art, or science, is essentially a closed one, once for all adequately set forth.

In beginning his critique of Seneca, Quintilian mentions former strictures which had caused some to suppose that he even hated the brilliant philosopher. This was doubtless in his essay "On the Causes of the Decay of Eloquence." This work is lost. The two collections, one of complete "Declamations," the other of outlined abstracts for similar pleas, are no longer attributed to Quintilian. Most of the subjects discussed are in fact precisely such fantastic theses, remote from all the needs of practical life, as he most vigorously condemns.

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The English reader is here again best served by the Bohn Classical Library. In two volumes J. S. Watson gives a careful literal translation, with copious notes, chiefly drawn from the exhaustive edition of Spaulding. English and American school books usually offer us Book X. only; Professor Frieze in a useful annotated edition includes also XII. But the first two books deserve much better treatment. The best text edition is Meister's, in Schenkl's attractive "Bibliotheca" (Leipzig and Prague). This contains also critical notes, and furthermore supplies the sources for Quintilian's many quotations. Poggio re-discovered Quintilian at St. Gall, and the complete copy made by the Renaissance scholar is still to be seen in the library of San Lorenzo at Florence.

CHAPTER XXXIII

THE PLINIES

PLINY THE ELDER — 23–79 A.D.

PLINY THE YOUNGER — 61–114(?) A.D.

THE brief reign of Titus included three public calamities so overwhelming that they must have confirmed the fond belief of the Jews in the signal curse destined to befall him who had assailed the holy city. The fire, almost as destructive as Nero's, and the pestilence, that slew ten thousand in a day, were local Roman disasters. Far better remembered is the eruption of Vesuvius, that destroyed Pompeii and altered nearly all the physical features of the Neapolitan region.

79–81 A.D.

79 A.D.

Of the many victims on that occasion, by far the most illustrious was Gaius Plinius Secundus, generally known as "Pliny the Elder." This unwearying student was born, of good Roman stock, at New Como, in 23 A.D. Even when he had become one of Vespasian's most trusted and active commanders, his reading and writing never ceased. The latter half of the night, the supper hour, even his bathing time, were anxiously improved, a slave constantly reading to him, or taking notes from his dictation. A shorthand writer, in warm gloves, shared his winter walks. His nephew recalled, even, with some vexation, no doubt, having been reproved for spending at all, out of doors, time which could have been devoted to study. His scrap-books alone, finely and closely written, amounted to 160 volumes.

Epist., III., 5, 11–16.

This extraordinary man was commander of the Roman fleet when he risked and lost his life in an attempt to observe more closely the eruption of the volcano, and to save some of its victims. His nephew, who is the chief subject of this chapter, was then but eighteen, and there is some excuse for a certain levity and self-consciousness betrayed even in his account of that terrible scene.

Epist., vi., 16.

Cf. Epist., vii., 20.

The uncle can hardly have been a considerate tutor of youth. Even the catalogue of his lost works, filially recorded by his kinsman, is exhausting. History of his own times, thirty-one books; German wars, twenty; debatable points of grammar, eight; art of oratory, three; biography of his friend and patron, the tragedian and general Pomponius Secundus, two, etc., etc.

Epist., iii., 5, 2-6.

We possess only the "Historia Naturalis," or Cyclopædia, completed, provisionally, and dedicated to the prince regent, Titus, in 77 A.D. Some peculiarities of this work would bewilder us, but for our knowledge of the author's life and his methods. The style, though usually bald and hasty, changes curiously as he passes from one subject to another. The truth is, Pliny has here excerpted some five hundred Greek and Latin authors, many of them quite beyond his own range of intelligent criticism. On farming, *e.g.*, he speaks with Cato's harsh simplicity, but next moment a philosophic passage imitates closely the rhetoric of Seneca. Pliny's own style, as in the fulsome dedication, is highly artificial, labored, and tawdry.

The most famous phrase in the whole work is perhaps the remark, clearly occasioned by a gap in his authorities, that in a certain year the art of sculpture among the Greeks "stopped," (*cessavit*) and was suddenly revived thirty-five Olympiads later.

H. N., xxxiv., 7, 52.

All uses of minerals are berated as impiety. "How in-

nocent, how blest, how delightful our life would be, if it craved nothing save what is on earth's surface, in short, what is within its reach!" Even coin, and commerce itself, are alike accurst. Each heroic statue is a monument of mortal audacity. The hewing away of mountains, and the traversing the sea to fetch the blocks from foreign quarries, are alike impious attacks on the barriers set by Providence between the nations. We might often fancy we were listening to John Ruskin's fierce onslaught upon a more sordid and ugly desecration of Nature by man. Yet on this very subject of the plastic arts, and others as well, the loss of the original sources makes Pliny the chief, often our sole reliance. During most of the Middle Ages, his Cyclopædia filled a much larger place than the Britannica holds in our day.

xxxiii., 1, 3.

xxxiv., 7, 18.

xxxvi., 1, 2.

The general plan of the work is curious, but not so illogical. It may be thus summarized: Book I., contents and general bibliography of sources; II., general description of the universe; III.–VI., geography and ethnology; VII., anthropology; VIII.–XI., zoology; XII.–XIX., descriptive botany; XX.–XXVII., vegetable curatives; XXVIII.–XXXII., curatives from the animal kingdom; XXXIII.–XXXVII., metals and stones. In the last section is included, episodically as it were, the use of bronze, marble, etc., in art. The work is a manual of the physical sciences and their most useful applications.

Pliny is a Pantheist, but much less than Lucretius does he accept the universality of law. Hence he is credulous as to any phenomenon, and records it on scantiest evidence. He is often querulous, also, complaining, *e.g.*, that every infant weeps from birth, but not one learns to laugh for at least a month. Many, perhaps most, of his statements are unintelligible, or irrational, or utterly antiquated, in the light of modern science. Yet both for the manifold

data not elsewhere accessible, and as a compendium of what was at least generally accepted for centuries as truth, this work is of the utmost interest to the historian of the human intellect. Of literary form or quality, however, it has little indeed. This must be our excuse for attempting no more adequate account of it here.

"Hail, Nature, mother of all things, and be thou gracious to me, since I, alone of Quirites, have glorified thee in all thy parts!" Such is his final and not ineffective cry.

The sister's son of this gallant, tireless, opinionated, pessimistic scholar, called, after his adoption by his kinsman, Gaius Plinius Cæcilius Secundus, is now best known as "Pliny the Younger." Quintilian had probably more influence than his uncle in moulding the youth's tastes. He early became a busy successful advocate, and through his eloquence—combined of necessity with courtly tact—rose into such a political career as was yet open under the empire. The old curule offices were still formally filled, chiefly by the emperor's personal appointment. For several months of the year 100 A.D. Trajan even resigned the consulship in Pliny's favor. Military service he naturally shared also. At the very close of his life we find him for two years in charge of Bithynia as the emperor's legate.

Pliny's wealth was abundant, and was used with wise generosity. In particular he showed his love for his native Como by such munificent gifts as a system of public baths, an endowed library, etc. Impecunious men of letters, like Martial, found him a generous patron. It is not wholly strange if we find in this happy man's writings a picture of Roman life hardly to be reconciled with Martial's or Juvenal's.

Luckily for Pliny's consistency, no word of his uttered before Domitian's death appears to be preserved. For his prosperity throughout that reign he makes the best apolo-

gies he can: that his promotions and other favors were accepted before the tyrant revealed his worst traits, that in the last years of terror he had declined the imperial advances: that a signed order for his death was actually found, after Domitian himself was slain.

Of Pliny's speeches, polished by himself and his friends for years after their delivery, one survives, the panegyric on Trajan, delivered when he followed his master in the consulship. It is, in fact, our main, all but our sole, source for the history of the three first years of this noble reign. The financial reforms, the charities, the great constructions, of the new emperor are described in glowing colors. The bitter hatred expressed for Domitian can hardly have been necessary. In general the performance is wearisome to the modern reader, and surely not a fair result of Quintilian's precepts.

On the other hand, the "Letters" make up the most readable volume of classical Latin prose since Livy's. The title is really misleading. In all the nine books very few real epistles, of an occasional and spontaneous character, are to be found. Not only is each a little essay in its finished form; we get the impression that nearly all were so conceived. Each treats a single well-defined subject. In most cases there is no reason to be discovered why there should have been any address added, save perchance *Ad Posteritatem*.

We miss the enjoyable consciousness, so often felt in perusing Cicero's billets to Atticus, not to mention many a more recent volume of familiar letters, that we are hearing what the writer would never have wished or allowed us to know. The general view of social life under Trajan, and especially of Pliny's own character, is doubtless far too optimistic. Yet the work is generally and rightly praised, as the autobiography of a lovable, refined, surprisingly modern gentleman. We often lay the book down, as in-

deed the brevity, the completeness, the finish, of each letter make it easy to do. Yet we gladly pick it up again, and we acquire at last an intimate familiarity with the writer and his large circle of friends. Though the letters are not arranged in exact chronological order, the nine books seem to have followed each other successively between 96 and 110 A.D.

Some of Pliny's foibles, such as his frank vanity and self-consciousness, his hunger for immortal fame, his credulity as to ghosts and superstitions, his dislike of his eloquent rival Regulus—not merely as a heartless informer in Domitian's worst days, but quite as much for his popularity and success in the law courts—only appeal to our human sympathy. His rapturous descriptions of his own villas in various parts of Italy are sincere and loving. Indeed, Pliny's longing for quiet rustic life, and delight in natural beauty, inspire his heartiest utterances. Such a graphic sketch as that of the head-waters of the Clitumnus might remind us yet again of Ruskin, in a happier mood.

Epist., viii., 8.

Pliny fully appreciated the overwhelming superiority of Tacitus, though he strove to believe himself the second author of the age. "I prophesy," he writes, "that your histories will be immortal: hence the greater, I will frankly confess, is my desire to be inscribed therein." He repeats with delight an anecdote told him by the historian, how a strange gentleman sat next him at the games. After varied and scholarly conversation the unknown asked: "Are you an Italian or a provincial?" "You are already acquainted with me through my works." "Are you, then, Tacitus, or Pliny?" The story may have been slightly modified to please the eager vanity of Pliny: and the fame of both may have been chiefly from their oratory.

Epist., vii., 33.

It can hardly be questioned that Pliny has posed carefully

before his mirror, in his finest attire, with his best side displayed. But, as a friend adds: "We may well be grateful to the artist for such an ideal." Like Seneca, he shows real and extraordinary tenderness for children, slaves, and dependants, generally. His helpless, corpulent mother makes a single striking appearance, sharing the boy's aimless flight at the time of the great eruption. Pliny's childlessness was a source of lasting grief to him. We may insert here a sincere love-letter to his wife Calpurnia.

"You will not believe what a longing for you possesses me. The chief part of this is my love; and then we have not grown used to be apart. So it comes to pass that I lie awake a great part of the night, thinking of you, and that by day, when the hours return at which I was wont to visit you, my feet take me, as it is so truly said, to your chamber; but not finding you there, I return, sick and sad at heart, like an excluded lover. The only time that is free from these torments is when I am being worn out at the bar, and in the suits of my friends. Judge you what must be my life, when I find my repose in toil, my solace in wretchedness and anxiety. Farewell."

Tacitus is not by any means the only friend to whom gentle Pliny looks up with reverence. The heroic old Verginius Rufus, who had twice refused the crown, could have wished no other hand to write his epitaph. The heroism of Arria and her kinswomen, who were so often bereft by judicial murders, is described in affectionate admiration.

The best illustration of Pliny's loyalty, and indeed of his rather helpless dependence, in responsible place, on a firmer will or a larger mind, will be found in his real correspondence with Trajan during his stay in Bithynia. His anxious appeals for instructions seem to include nearly every detail of executive duty. His large-minded master once or twice suggests to him to rely somewhat upon his own discretion.

Best known, for special reasons, is his account of the

pestilent and persistent Christian "superstition." Already we seem to see, more clearly shaping itself, the Roman consciousness that here was a force against which the older civilization might have to contend for its very existence. The quiet heroism of the martyrs baffled, awed, perhaps filled with remorse, this unusual type of Roman governor. "I judged it necessary to endeavor to extort the truth, by putting two female slaves to the torture, who were said to officiate in their religious rites, but all I could discover was evidence of an absurd and extravagant superstition." Again we are reminded that a new time is dawning.

Of Pliny's last days we hear nothing. In his letters to Trajan there is no allusion to a return to Rome. It is simply inferred that he died in his Asiatic province, or presently after his arrival in Italy.

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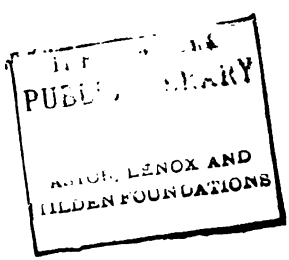
The elder Pliny's work fills six volumes, whether in Latin, as last edited by Detlefsen, or in the Bohn translation. The latter is intelligent, and has also copious, rather discursive, foot-notes.

Pliny's letters are edited for our schools in selections only, though neither the bulk nor the quality would hinder us from reading them all. For the non-classical student "there is a very faithful translation in English, by Lewis (Trübner), and a more readable version in Johnsonese by Melmoth, revised by Bosanquet, for the Bohn series."



CHRISTIAN MARTYRS IN THE COLISEUM.

By Gérôme.


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CHAPTER XXXIV

CORNELIUS TACITUS

55 (?) 120 (?) A.D.

THIS great master of style, analyst of character, and austere critic of life, casts a long shadow backward, and has really been our companion ever since Augustus's death. Indeed, the story of the early empire can never be read without him. Even where Tacitus's own records have perished, he has colored the opinions and expressions of all later chroniclers. Merivale's large picture of the early empire is largely Tacitean in its outlines and gloomy tints.

This author has often been likened to Carlyle. More obvious is the comparison with his chief classical rival, Thukydides: for each of these two recorded, in memorable form, what he regarded, no doubt with much truth, as the downfall, almost the suicide, of his own people. The Athenian author excels in self-control, apparent impartiality, energy in seeking data at first hand, even in statesmanlike breadth of view. In vividness, quickness of touch, withering power of cynical analysis, in appeals to the sense of pity or indignation, Tacitus has never found his master.

We are tempted at times to see a perverseness of destiny in the fate of Athens. Aristides's rugged honesty had made a hundred other free states eager to organize under Athenian leadership. Pericles had at least some gleam of inspiration foreshadowing the principles of federation and representative government. The superior strength

of Athens over the Dorians in arms seemed decisive in 420 B.C.

A few more years of peace, and the swift growth of commerce and wealth might have reconciled even the Corinthians to Athenian hegemony. Had the Fates granted Athens one more great statesman, or prolonged Pericles's life for a decade, or merely effaced from the scroll of the future Alkibiades's career or the Sicilian expedition, Greece might yet have been a nation indeed, the wonderful Athenian character, expressing itself in drama, music, sculpture, architecture, as in statecraft, might have had full development and lasting vitality, we might even to-day possess, or be possessed by, the Hellenic spirit of beauty, instead of groping for a few crumbling fragments from her silent tomb.

Such reflections add a certain tragic pathos, or even epic dignity, to Thukydides's story: but he himself hardly reminds us, save in a few passages of Pericles's funeral oration, how much after-time had to lose in the great struggle. Tacitus's tone is infinitely more bitter, even despairing. Yet we do not fully share, for ourselves, his consciousness of irreparable loss.

The Roman rule over all civilized nations was far more masterful and lasting than Athens's control over her little Ægean world. The Greek elements themselves in that composite later culture acquired through Rome a wider dissemination than even an Alexander could give them. Civilization to-day for its essential unity still thanks the Cæsars.

It is amazing that neither the convulsions of the civil wars, nor the mad follies of Caligula and Nero, nor even the utter anarchy that followed the downfall of the last Julian emperor, enabled a single subject nation to regain its liberty. The legions still held the far frontiers,

Nero slain, June, 68.

Galba, Otho, Vitellius.

steadfast against Briton, German, and Parthian, while four fierce Romans vainly clutched the crown, and passed it to a worthier fifth, within little more than a year.

Vespasian proclaimed, July, 69.

The old Roman aristocracy lingered on. Many of its members enjoyed great wealth, though no longer in political control. Numbers of them were still sent out to recoup their fortunes as provincial governors. Even a Senate existed, at least in name.

But the very success of Rome's conquests had made her whole world ready for a military despotism. The rabble of the capital could no longer be pushed through so much as the decent forms of election. Republican or even democratic ideas still lived only in the brains of philosophers and visionary doctrinaires. Tacitus accepts the empire much as Livy did: as a desperate necessity.

Caligula and Nero perished by just vengeance, wreaked for atrocious crimes. But the utter anarchy of the year 68–69 was felt to be worse than the maddest of rulers, and the rude soldier Vespasian, though he banished the Stoics, and slew the fearless patriot Helvidius Priscus, was hailed then, and is still considered, the saviour of society. The great military machine required a despotic master. From his caprices there was no escape, save to kill the last autocrat: and try chances with the next.

Meantime, many a native renegade, shifty Greek, or Oriental adventurer, secured limitless wealth, and, for the time, unbounded power, by winning the emperor's affection and poisoning his mind against the most successful of his governors and generals. The very Senate, in an abject effort to show its loyalty, usually turned like a hungry wolf-pack upon anyone, even of their own number, on whom the despot, or his reigning favorite of either sex, had glanced with hatred or suspicion.

Such is our general impression of high life at the capi-

tal, from Augustus's old age to Domitian's fall. But the last three years were by far the worst, so Tacitus assures us, and finally crippled the whole folk beyond recovery.

That this century was, for the provinces generally, on the whole, a relief from the previous age, is generally agreed. The system of spoliation was worked more moderately under a single strong executive. That even in Italy, in Rome itself, there still lived happy, virtuous, self-respecting men and women, we must believe. Indeed, Pliny seems to prove as much. There are those who consider Tacitus's delineation, even of the most detested of emperors, to be utterly distorted, caricatured, and unfair; but certainly it is indelibly stamped on the imagination of mankind.

As to the chief outward events in this career we know very little. Neither the date of birth nor of death is to be ascertained. Though Pliny once mentions him as a man of about his own age, Tacitus's political career indicates that he was some years older. It is only a natural surmise that he was Quintilian's pupil. He must have had good social position, since he so early as 78 A.D. married the daughter of Agricola, the famous governor of Britain. He mentions the acceptance of honors from all the three Flavian emperors. That in 88 A.D. he was both prætor and one of the fifteen commissioners who conducted the secular games, he also records. When Agricola perished, in 93 A.D., Tacitus was absent from Italy, we know not in what official capacity. In 97, under Trajan, he became consul, and delivered a notable oration on the most venerable and illustrious of citizens, Verginius Rufus. This we learn from Pliny, a dozen of whose letters are addressed to the historian. "Of his good fortune," says Pliny of Rufus, "this was the

Pliny, Epist., vii., 20, 3-4.

Histories, i., 1.
Annals, xi., 11.

Pliny, Epist., ii., 1.

final crown : the most eloquent of eulogists." In 100 A.D. the two friends, Pliny and Tacitus, united to prosecute successfully an extortionate governor of Africa, Marius Priscus. After that year Tacitus appears to have retired, both from his active law-practice and from a political career, to devote his energy to composition. All his orations have perished. His historical works were published under Trajan, and he is supposed to have died about the close of that reign.

THE LIFE OF AGRICOLA

When Tacitus turned from political and forensic oratory to history, he developed somewhat gradually, with evident conscious effort, that terse, austere, yet extremely effective style which is peculiarly his own. In parts of the "Agricola" we may still hear the rather ornate orator, and even catch familiar echoes of those extravagant funeral eulogies whose reckless praise had annoyed Livy.

Though not published until after Nerva's death, the cautious skill of many portions suggest that they were composed for Domitian's jealous eye. The essay is in large part a sober account of Britain as a province. Emphasis is thrown on Agricola's early training, and later his eight years of faithful command in the British Isles ; or on the promptness with which, in 69 A.D., he joined and materially aided Vespasian, who had himself served in the far Western islands, long before he won the imperial crown by high success in Palestine.

The skill of the pleader, even a certain dramatic fairness, is to be heard also in the undoubtedly fictitious speech put into the mouth of Galgacus, the gallant British chief. Not only does it breathe a spirit of patriotic pride, and fierce love of freedom, but by bold touches indicates the weakness of Roman rule. Of

Agricola, 30–32.

the heroic Boadicea, more fully treated in the Annals, we have here but a glimpse. Agricola's later years spent in inactivity at Rome, during which by submissive self-effacement he escaped Domitian's deadly ill-will, are lightly touched upon.

Agricola, 16.
Annals, xiv., 31.

The rumor that Agricola was poisoned, at Domitian's order, is evidently believed by Tacitus, who mentions with sinister emphasis the suspiciously frequent and solicitous visits of the court physician. The death of Agricola was just at the beginning of Domitian's final triennium of atrocious cruelty. Tacitus is thankful that he did not live to behold "the Senate house besieged, the massacre, in one havoc, of so many consulars." The historian seems to have been himself present in those days in the Senate. "Our hands dragged Helvidius to prison. Ourselves were tortured with the spectacle, and sprinkled with the innocent blood—" of other heroic victims. "Even Nero withdrew his eyes from the cruelties he commanded. Under Domitian it was the chief of our miseries to behold and to be gazed upon."

Agricola, 45.

While Tacitus is both courtly and sincere in his praise of Trajan, his tones are those of despair. "Now our spirits begin to revive. . . . The emperor Nerva united two things before incompatible, monarchy and liberty. . . . Yet from the nature of human infirmity, remedies work more tardily than disease. . . . It is easier to suppress genius and industry than to recall them. Sloth, however odious at first, becomes at length attractive." This is the prevailing key, to the end, of our author's utterance. Whatever the real causes, as to the result he was not in essential error. He was himself, in literature, the last great Roman figure.

Agricola, 3.

The one purely subjective allusion is a happy one. Agricola "when consul, contracted his daughter, a lady

already of happiest promise, to myself, then a very young man; and after his office expired I received her in marriage." Tacitus seems more hopeful than Pliny as to a future life: "If, as philosophers suppose, exalted souls do not perish with the body, may you repose in peace." Yet like his friend he finds the chief reward for merit in a lasting earthly memory. "It remains, and shall remain, in the minds of men, transmitted in the records of fame through an eternity of years." Certainly few brief biographies have better deserved, by their tactful skill, eloquence, and warm personal feeling, to accomplish so lofty an end, than this little sketch of a discreet courtier and provincial governor under the Flavian emperors. The name at least of Agricola is remembered by school-boys; Verginius Rufus, apparently a much more heroic figure, has utterly perished.

Agricola, 9.

Agricola, 46.

GERMANIA

The second brief monograph appeared "in Trajan's second consulship," *i.e.*, 98 A.D. Tacitus's silence indicates that he does not speak from close personal knowledge or extended travel in German lands. "This is what we have learned (*accepimus*) concerning the origin and manners of all the Germans in common," he remarks at an important transition. Cæsar's Gallic War, Books IV. and V., gives us the earliest glimpse of both our ancestral homes, England and Germany. Livy and Sallust appear to have discussed the Germans in detail. The elder Pliny's twenty books have been mentioned. But the chance of survival leaves this little essay our chief source-book still.

Germania, 28.

While Tacitus sets out in good faith to delineate "the geography and ethnology of Germany," and appears to be in the main impartial as well as fairly well informed, he is

too clever a rhetorician, too much a preacher born, not to point out clearly and often the contrast between Germanic virtue and the vicious luxury of degraded Latium.

Germania, 17–27, passim.

"Among the Germans usury is unknown, gold and silver prized no more than clay. Dress is rude, rational, simple, for both sexes. Each man has one undowered, devoted, faithful helpmeet for life. Every woman cares wholly for her own offspring. There are no wills or legacies. The rude tumuli of the dead are not oppressed with sumptuous monuments." Such assertions carried their own antithesis.

The fondness for barley beer, for martial councils and abundant discussion, the continuance of family feuds, the acceptance of *wehr-geld* for all crimes of violence, even to manslaughter, the shrill or thunderous songs of the "bards"—these are all truthful touches. The belief in the sanctity, wisdom, even supernatural foresight, of women, seems supported by passages in both Cæsar and Strabo. The especial sacredness, and use for augury, of white horses, though it reminds us of Persian customs, is also probably not invented.

As a whole, however, the essay is unsatisfying, even meagre. Especially is this true of the attempt to locate the various races and clans. We get a decided impression that the Romans knew, with any accuracy, only the Suevi and neighboring tribes of the West, with whom they were in constant contact. Yet the mere mention of the Langobardi, or the Angli, is of historic interest.

Germania, § 40.

THE HISTORIES

These two brief essays, by the side of Tacitus's chief task, take on the appearance of mere elaborated episodes. Indeed, the general account of Britain, and still more of Germany,

did, no doubt, relieve his chronicle of a prolonged digression.

The master work of Livy, still unrivalled in popular favor, had covered the whole of the Republican period, and half the reign of Augustus. Tacitus, after some vacillation, selected as his subject the early empire, from Tiberius's accession to Domitian's fall. It may have been more than a courtly compliment when he proposed to reserve, as a happier theme, for his old age, the story of Nerva and Trajan. Certainly, no such bold venture ever saw the light. Nor was his projected supplementary account of Augustus ever written.

Hist., I., 1.

Annals, III., 24.

In the chosen period of eighty-two years the most violent break is the passing of Nero, last of the Julian house, with the following year of anarchy. Tacitus chose to begin with the second section. Indeed, the "Annals" may really have been an afterthought. The "Histories" are on a very large scale. Our manuscript breaks off suddenly about midway in the fifth book, but the events of the two years 69–70 A.D. are not completed even then. The entire work comprised at least twelve books, probably fourteen. We deeply regret the loss of the portion on Domitian's time, where Tacitus spoke with fullest knowledge. Yet such scenes as the triumphant entry of Vitellius and his savage German legions into the city, the pitched battle in the Campus Martius between Vitellians and the Flavians, with the ferocious rabble looking on as at a splendid show in the amphitheatre, are unforgettable pictures by an eyewitness.

Hist. II., 88, 89.

Hist. II., 82, 83.

As to Tacitus's sources of knowledge we know little. The elder Pliny had described "all the wars that Rome had waged with the Germans." Vipstanus Messalla and other elderly friends

Pliny, Letters, III., 5.

of the historian gave him freely from their store of personal memories. Josephus and the Old Testament he certainly did *not* know, when he wrote his incoherent and mythical account of the origin of the Jews, tracing them from Crete. In general, we are not to regard Tacitus as a learned investigator, or even as a man of remarkably wide intellectual interests. What he tells us derives its chief value, rather, from the alembic of his unique mind, its charm from his inimitable utterance.

Hist. v., 2 ff.

THE ANNALS

This title, though truthful as to its indication of the form, is not used by Tacitus himself. The work is clearly the last written, at least of the extant books. Once the "Histories" are clearly referred to as already published. The sixteen books covered the entire period from Tiberius's accession till the year 69 A.D.: fifty-five years. But Books VII.–X., on the years 31–46 A.D., including the whole reign of Claudius, are lost, while elsewhere there are grievous gaps.

Annals, xi., 11.

Here all the qualities of Tacitus's style are seen at their extreme. His incidents are selected, and treated, with a persistent view to rhetorical effect. He is always more artist than historian. Cynical comment constantly takes the place of needed elucidation of the facts, which is indeed often curiously lacking. His sources, moreover, have almost wholly perished, leaving him master of the field. Doubtless he made use of the meagre acts of the Senate, and other official records. But it is quite certain that the gossip of the palace, or popular tradition, was also acceptable, if it suggested an effective detail.

The account of Tiberius's last days is generally considered our author's masterpiece. The general story of the Emperor's self-exile, the usurpation of all power by Sejanus,

and his spectacular overthrow, which inspired some of Juvenal's best-known verses, is abundantly authenticated. And yet, the character of Tiberius is still the subject of widest disagreement. In truth this, like many another portrait in the long gallery, is regarded as a creation of artistic genius, which may or may not be a fair likeness.

The character of Germanicus is printed in far lighter colors than Tacitus elsewhere uses, as a contrast to his grim, silent uncle. Even the eulogist's account of his actual deeds, however, fails to justify the exalted position as a popular idol accorded to his hero. A notable modern painting, by Piloty, has made us familiar with Germanicus's triumph, the proudest hour of that prince's life. Descriptions of this pageant occur in both Tacitus and Strabo. Yet the German artist has seen clearly how little cause there was for Roman pride, since the heroic Thusnelda is a captive through her own father's treachery, and her dauntless husband Hermann is still unsubdued.

Annals, ii., 41. Strabo, vii., p. 291.

Grave as are the gaps in his two chief works, Tacitus makes upon the thoughtful reader an adequate, an overwhelming impression. The world may always see the first century of our era through his eyes. There is much wisdom, however, in the impressive protest of Professor Schanz, against putting this terrific Vision of Sin and Misery as a whole into the hands of youthful students or readers. The impression is as gloomy, almost as vivid, as that of the Inferno itself. The finest traits of Tacitus's wonderful style can be illustrated sufficiently by detached scenes and passages, some of which are in comparatively cheerful tints.

THE DIALOGUE "DE ORATORIBUS"

A problem hardly soluble is offered by the graceful, instructive little dialogue "De Oratoribus," or rather, "On the causes for the decay of oratory under the empire." Transmitted as Tacitus's, it is written in a genial, almost a diffuse style, not unlike the "De Oratore," which it frankly imitates. Furthermore, certain fearless allusions to unfavorable conditions make it unlikely that the little book saw the light under Domitian. The theory that it is the missing work of Quintilian on the same theme is exploded. There is a general agreement that it is Tacitus's own. The last American editor, Professor C. E. Bennett, sets its date so early as 81 A.D. Professor Schanz, however, takes the other horn of the dilemma, and assigns the essay to the time after Domitian's death. This requires the supposition that Tacitus, while acquiring his unique historical style, retained also at command what we may almost call his former dialect. Pliny's tasteless oration, and most graceful epistolary manner, are sometimes brought forward as a parallel example.

Cf. supra, p. 86.

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A.D.	*Political Events.*	A.D.	*Literary Events.*
14	Accession of Tiberius.		
15–16	Germanicus in Germany. Sejanus prefect of the Prætorians.		
17	Germanicus's triumph.		
		18	Death of Ovid and Livy.
19	Death of Germanicus in Syria.		
23	Death of Drusus, said to have been poisoned by Sejanus.		
26	Tiberius withdraws to Capri, never to return.		
	27–30 Ministry of Jesus.		
31	Fall and death of Sejanus.		
		34	Birth of Persius.
		35 (?)	Birth of Quintilian.
37	Death of Tiberius at Capri. Accession of Caligula.		
41	Caligula assassinated. Accession of Claudius.	41	Seneca's "De Ira," i.–iii. Exile of Seneca.
43	Claudius invades Britain.	43	Birth of Martial.
		49	Recall of Seneca.
		50	Columella born.
54	Claudius poisoned by Agrippina. Accession of Nero.		
		56	Seneca "De Clementia," I.–III. *Paul to the Corinthians, I.*
59	Murder of Agrippina by Nero's order.		
61	Boadicea rises against the Romans and is defeated.		

Political Events.		*Literary Events.*	
A.D.		A.D.	
		62	Death of Persius.
64	Great fire in Rome. Persecution of the Christians. Building of Nero's Golden House.		
65	Conspiracy of Piso detected.	65	Death of Seneca and Lucan.
66 (?)	Martyrdom of St. Paul and St. Peter at Rome.	66	Death of Petronius.
68	Nero slain. Accession of Galba.	68	*Epistles of John, I., II. III.*
69	Death of Galba. Accession and suicide of Otho. Accession and death of Vitellius. Accession of Vespasian.	69	Quintilian appointed by Galba professor of rhetoric.
70	Titus takes Jerusalem. Helvidius Priscus exiled and executed.		
71	Triumph of Vespasian and Titus.		
75	Stoics and Cynics expelled by Vespasian.		
		77	Pliny's "Historia Naturalis" dedicated to Titus.
79	Death of Vespasian. Titus emperor. Eruption of Vesuvius.	79	Death of the elder Pliny.
78–85	Agricola governor of Britain.		
80	Pestilence and fire at Rome. Arch of Titus erected.		
84	Agricola builds chain of forts from Forth to Clyde.		
		85–102	Martial's Epigrams, I.–XII.
90	Expulsion of the philosophers from Rome.		
		92	Statius's Thebaid.
		92–93	Quintilian composes his Institutions.
96	Domitian slain. Accession of Nerva. Consulate of Verginius Rufus and Tacitus.	96	Funeral oration on Verginius by Tacitus.

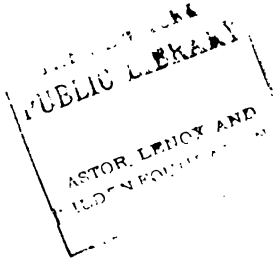
	Political Events.		*Literary Events.*
A.D.		A.D.	
98	Death of Nerva. Accession of Trajan.	98 (?)	*Gospel of St. John.*
100	Forum of Trajan built. Consulate of Pliny.	100	Pliny's eulogy on Trajan.
		102	Martial dies, in Spain.
111–113	Pliny governor of Bithynia.	111 (Sept.)–113 (Jan.)	Letters from Pliny in Bithynia to Trajan.
117	Death of Trajan.		

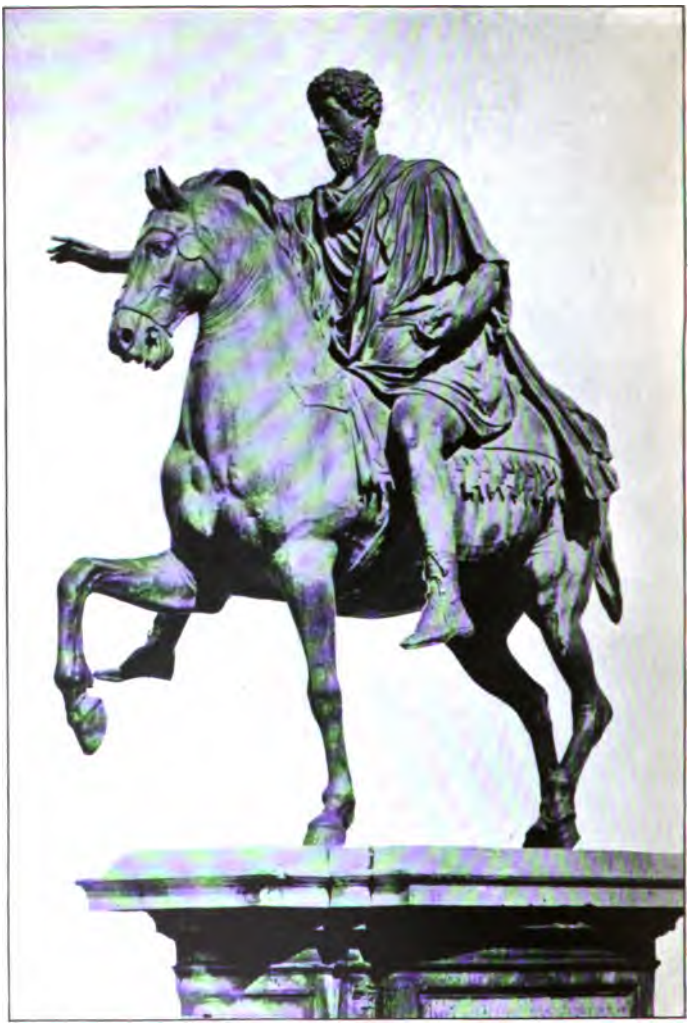
EPILOGUE

THE very greatness of Tacitus emphasizes his loneliness, and warns us that it is time to close this volume. Hardly more than a pigmy beside him stands, as an historian, Suetonius Tranquillus, who, like Tacitus and Pliny, a lawyer under Trajan, lived on to be for some years Hadrian's private secretary. Of his diligent compilations only the "Lives of the Twelve Cæsars" survived entire. These gossipy, anecdotic, marvel-loving, often scandalous accounts are neither history nor biography. Their style is clear and simple. They are even in a way restful after the "Annals" and "Histories," since they pretend to no elaboration, no dignity, no strenuous moral quality. Suetonius does not rise even to indignation. Thus his account of Domitian, whom he knew so well, is distinctly more lenient than the passing allusions of Tacitus, or even of Pliny.

Suetonius's lives of Terence and the elder Pliny, perhaps also of Horace and Lucan, are tolerably preserved in connection with those authors' own works or comments on them. The whole volume of his literary biographies, from Cicero and Sallust to Nero's time, would be valuable, if extant, though it too was rather a copious and early collection of the traditions than a work of research or judicious selection.

Far more graceful and enjoyable is Aulus Gellius, who perhaps acquired in Athens his genial taste and sense of form. Almost any one of his three hundred and seventy essays would serve as a daily lesson in our own schools. The average length is hardly four hundred words. Archæ-


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MARCUS AURELIUS.

Equestrian statue on the Capitoline.

ology, history, biography, literary criticism, epitaphs, anecdotes, etc., etc., make his "Attic Nights" anything but monotonous. Often we have to do rather with a student's scrap-book than with an author's compositions: yet Gellius's erudition, if not deep, is widely gathered, and lightly carried. Though the output apparently of a whole life, all the papers have a certain youthful Wander-year tone. He looks reverently backward to the Catos and Varros of a greater time. In short, he shows in amiable, contented fashion the decay of the intellectual life.

Gellius likewise illustrates the all but complete fusion of Greek and Latin culture. Suetonius, Apuleius, Hadrian himself, wrote in both languages. Marcus Aurelius, on the Roman throne, preferred Greek, even when touching upon subjects of purely national interest. As the organ of imperialism, and as the vehicle of culture generally, Latin was to lose ground more and more. Already Plutarch, Arrian, Lucian, are the most prominent authors of the second century. The removal of the capital left Rome a provincial city.

Under Hadrian lived also Annæus Florus, perhaps a countryman, or even a kinsman, of the Senecas. His panegyric on the Roman people, in two books, is not indeed a mere "Epitome of Livy," in which character it was long preserved and conned, but it is a shallow, careless compilation, much below Suetonius in quality.

Unless we add the great jurist Gaius, who made his digest under Antoninus Pius, these three are actually the best examples we can offer of classical prose after Tacitus. So swift is the descent.

It is not, indeed, necessary to believe that the Roman or Latin race accomplished national suicide in the days of Tiberius, Nero, and Domitian. The strong and righteous imperial rule of the second century A.D. is truly Roman

still. Large as was its creative activity, the race had never even claimed artistic supremacy. Literature, like all plastic arts save perhaps architecture, always bore among Romans the stigma of levity. *Gravitas*, on the other hand, a certain majestic self-respect, has been recognized as the most striking Roman quality that pervades Latin letters. It had been rudely undermined by the loss of freedom and long capricious persecution. Martial is the least dignified of authors. After Tacitus none regains the pedestal.

That alone would not be a fatal loss. But the social life, the ethical traditions, the very speech, of Latium had at last been overwhelmed by the motley millions that had inundated the metropolis. The barbarians arrived long before the fourth century, and not in hostile arms. The early impact of Hellenism had perhaps been salutary and even needful, to bring any adequate culture or fine art to rude Latium. But now the creeds and superstitions, the morality and the immorality, of a remoter Orient swept over Italian and Hellenic lands alike. The greatest names of the second century in either literature may serve to illustrate this state of things.

APULEIUS

Lucian, from Samosata in Syria, is barely half-Hellenic. He knows every detail of the outworn Olympian mythology, but only to make it life-long his scoff. In the audacious comic sweep of his "True Story" he combines the Olympos and Hades of Homer with all the wilder marvels of Eastern imagination. He himself has faith in nothing.

The tale of "Lucius, or the Ass" is related by both Apuleius and Lucian, at very nearly the same date. We are told that it was not original with either. The metamorphosis there described could have found no place even in

frivolous Ovid's catholic aggregation of such marvels. It is accomplished by no intelligent higher power, nor has it the slightest moral significance as a retribution or a warning. The change of a youth into a donkey is a triumph of pure magic, of witchcraft. From Horace's "Canidia," or even earlier, Romans had played with such miracles, not believed in their possibility. In Lucian the restoration is also a matter of pure chance, accomplished instantly when the proper antidote, a bunch of roses, is touched. In such a fantastic world there is no room even for the slow crude justice of the quarrelsome Homeric gods.

Into the same central legend Apuleius has interwoven nearly a score of other widely varied tales. Some of the robbers' exploits here unfolded recall Herodotos's Rhampsinitos. More than once, again, lovers' stratagems might make us believe we have opened the Decameron, or some yet more modern volume, by mistake. The dragon and the sorceress, equally at home in the wonder-tales of all lands, appear here also.

But even the favorite and pathetic Greek myth of Cupid and Psyche, not traceable to any earlier author, though surely not of Apuleius's creation, is shot through with the golden threads of alien fancy. In fact, this is the first appearance of the modern type of fairy-tale. Psyche's home is not located at all. The story, told by a villanous old woman in the robbers' cave to divert a captive girl, begins simply: "In a certain country lived a king and queen; they had three beautiful daughters."

Apuleius is by no means, like Lucian, destructive of pious belief. Rather is he to be counted among the sincere devotees and mystics. To his Lucius the great goddess Isis appears in a vision, promising the long-tortured youth his release from the hateful bestial shape. The price exacted for the restoration is gladly paid. He becomes her acolyte, and knows no such remorseful awaken-

ing as Catullus's Atys. It is with rapturous, unquestioning faith that he receives the greeting of Isis, as she rises out of the sea in her mysterious starry splendor:

"Lo, here am I, O Lucius, summoned by thy prayers; I the parent of creation, mistress of all the elements, first offspring of the ages, supreme among divinities, queen of ghosts, first of the celestials, the form unique of all gods and goddesses, I who by my nod accord the luminous summits of heaven, the healthful breezes of the sea, the mournful silences of the under-world; whose divinity, one in manifold forms, with various rites, under diverse names, all the earth adores."

Certainly there is no whisper of Lucian's mockery in all this. In truth, Apuleius is here gliding into something very like autobiography. An African by birth, educated first in Carthage—which was now becoming a rival of Rome in Latin culture—and later in Athens, he had travelled widely, and was himself initiated into many strange cults. Even Rome could not hold him permanently, and we hear of him last as again in Carthage, and a priest. Such is the life-story told us of the next "Latin" author of commanding genius after Tacitus. We surely seem to have stepped into another world.

The whole style and atmosphere of the work is as remote as could well be from classicism. Little save the inflections assure us, even, that we are truly reading Latin, not Italian. There are novel words, many of them Greek, not a few of remoter or unknown origin. The very order is modern. The shortened sentence, or at least phrase, of Seneca, is here outdone. In the artistic changeful prose of Apuleius we begin to hear the rhymes and cadences of modern accentual verse.

But above all, we realize that in this age the conventions that have dominated art, and life as revealed in art, are not

so much violated as outlived and forgotten. Behind Isis and Osiris troop the myriad other forms of Oriental beliefs. Mightiest of all, destined soon to displace Olympian paganism as the orthodox faith of the rulers and of the empire, primitive Christianity is essentially Hebraic and Eastern, a mystic faith, teaching that this life is either unreal or in itself unimportant, that in "other-worldliness" alone lies the hope of salvation. Whether preached by the Hebrew Paul in Greek cities or by Latin-speaking missionaries among the Britons and Germans, the story of the rise of Christianity is certainly no part of Græco-Roman letters.

Not merely Tacitus, who doubted whether fate or mere chance controlled the life of man, but Lucretius and Catullus, nay many a fearless thinker even of early Greece like Heracleitos and Anaxagoras, had indeed cast off all pretence of belief in Homer's undignified divinities. None the less, certain motives of action, a common conception of human duty and divine rule, had dominated alike the long life of man in the two lands of classic culture. A decided aversion from occultism, an open-eyed view of the higher powers, a hearty preference for this world over any casual hope of blessedness elsewhere, had been hardly less general. Even Plato undertakes to explain, to reduce to intelligible order, the eternal forces and truths that he descries; while Virgil endeavors, at least, to guide us through his vague, dim underworld. A certain simplicity and completeness of form, dignity, calmness, and even reticence, had characterized nearly all the best work, and must ever be associated with the word classical.

Annals, vi., 22.

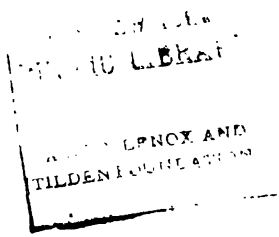
In the following centuries there are still great men who reach the world's ear in Latin speech as well as in Greek. The largest minds, like Augustine's, are most completely

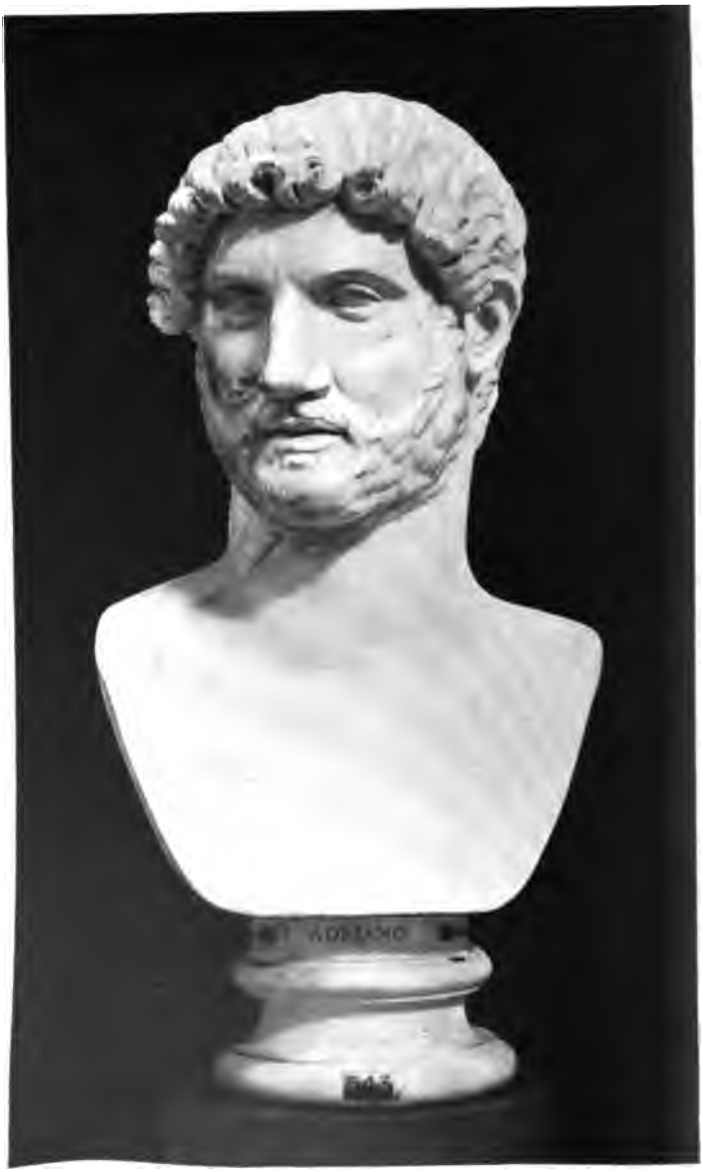
equipped from the treasuries of Greek and Latin antiquity. But antiquity it is, to them quite as truly as to us; and while we, to-day, are above all desirous once more to realize, and fully to profit by, our unbroken kinship with that remoter past, nearly every early Christian teacher, on the contrary, felt himself drawn, however reluctantly, into the death-struggle against the slow-dying influence of paganism. But that, again, is certainly too large a subject for a closing page.

As was said on a much earlier leaf, the chief gift of Roman letters to after-time was not imaginative, not poetic inspiration or form, but rather a calm, good taste, chiefly embodied in the prose style of Cicero and Livy, Quintilian and Pliny, to which Roman power and speech gave a world-wide currency.

The persistence of those forms in the intellectual life of Europe is no less wonderful. Dante, and he only in part, was the first to break away from the scholastic tradition, and write serious prose essays, as well as poetry, in the "vulgar speech," that is, in his real mother tongue. Much later, if not even to our own day, were the fully inflected Latin forms still used in the town-chronicles and records of Romagna, Tuscany, and Lombardy. The ritual of the great mother-church is Latin to-day. American scholars abroad are occasionally reminded, to their confusion and mortification, that all liberally educated men are still supposed to be masters of Terence's and Tully's speech. Though so profoundly modified, Latin never died. In half a dozen modern languages, among which our own might be included, the words, and much of the spirit, lives on in a continuity that has never been broken for a single generation.

There is a temptation to cite at least a few among the sweet-voiced minor poets of the later empire. Verse is in


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HADRIAN.

Antique bust in the Vatican.

itself so conventional, that the vanishing of classical Latin as a spoken language failed to break the Virgilian tradition. So Apollonios Rhodios had imitated, with scholarly accuracy, the Homeric dialect, which, in truth, had itself never been closely representative of any colloquial speech.

But not one of those later singers in the quantified Hellenic rhythms ever had a great popular or national importance, nor will one of them be successfully revived for our own interest and study. In so far as they were classic, they felt their own utter inferiority to the earlier masters, Virgil and Ovid.

Quantified verse, it will be remembered, had been introduced into Latin, not without difficulty, by Ennius. There is reason to believe that the folk-song, like the folk-speech, never heartily accepted its fetters. Certainly the elaborate Æolic strophes of Horace failed to reach the popular ear at all. In such snatches as Hadrian's address to his own parting soul:

"Animula vagula blandula!"

we begin to hear something very like the caressing softness of Tuscan verse to-day.

A new note also, perhaps of the same time, is heard in the song for Venus's spring festival, with its hurrying refrain:

"Who ne'er loved shall love to-morrow, who hath loved shall love again!"

Yet we suspect that we are listening to a much later voice, when near the close of the ninety-three verses the nightingale is heard, and the poet sighs:

"She is singing, we are silent. When returns the Spring for me?
When shall I be like unto the swallow, and be mute no more?"

Though this poem is still accurate in its quantities, yet the revival of the trochaic measures clearly aided the growing tendency to make the rhythmic stress coincide with the word accent of prose. Such lines as:

Et' canóras nón tacére díva jússit álitès,

(And the goddess bade the tuneful winged creatures not be mute.)

are very frequent: yet such perfect coincidence could hardly be found in a line of the entire Æneid. Whether an old popular measure or a new invention, this foreshadows a decisive revolt from the Greek verse-forms.

Certainly the more popular hymnology early began to neglect quantity for the accentual rhythms, discovered the resonant effect of recurrent end-rhyme, which in Latin is so extraordinarily easy as well as sonorous, and, in general, assumed the forms most familiar to us in our own verse. But as these magnificent chants like the "Dies Iræ" peal forth, we seem to have turned away altogether from the cadences of Catullus and Virgil. This, too, is a part of the long story of another day.

It is a curious but perhaps inexplicable fact that Dante's dearest rival in youth, Guido Cavalcanti, disliked Virgil, while Dante himself not only set the melancholy Mantuan, "who through long silence was grown hoarse," high above all other poets, conning his every verse until he had learned it by heart, but actually identified the Augustan singer with the human intellect and moral virtue itself. Thus alone and against utmost opposition did Dante descry the full significance of Roman life, and letters, to that modern world of which he is the chief forerunner. Across the ages he and Virgil join hands. To Dante, as to us, pagan Virgil, and even Homer's dim, stately shape, were nearer than Augustine and Jerome, the chief expositors of his own creed.

However fully we accept the spiritual and constructive teachings of Paul, or even of Augustine, we need no longer dread the fullest irradiation of our life by all that is true, beautiful, and lasting in Latin letters. Other and doubtless larger legacies did the Roman leave us; yet this also shall abide in our grateful remembrance.

As Professor Jebb and Professor Mackail have remarked, it is a Latin versifier of the late empire, after all, who utters best our appreciation of Cæsar's supreme accomplishment. A poet, himself of Egyptian birth, addressing the Vandal Stilicho, who through the weak Honorius ruled the Western world, Claudius Claudianus thus honors Rome as the common parent of civilized men:

"She, she only, has taken the conquered unto her bosom;
All mankind in a single name she united and cherished;
Not as a queen, but a mother, she citizens made of the vanquished,
Linking together the far-off lands in a bond of affection.
Now, for the peaceful ways she has taught, each man is indebted,
While he, an alien, wanders as if in the haunts of his fathers.
Now, whichever we will, we drink from Rhone or Orontes,
Since mankind is a single nation."

Even in the fourth century A.D. we can hardly believe that the wounds of the conquered races were all so fully healed: and yet: one law, one peaceful way of life, one clear speech by all men understood: It seems a dream of the far-off future, a prophecy, as of Tennyson's hopeful youth in "Locksley Hall." We too readily forget how far rough, selfish Rome actually strode along that same path.

FINIS.

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